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REPORT

OF THE

EIGHTH MEETING

OF THE

National Conference

OF

Unitarian and Other Christian Churches,

HELD IN SARATOGA, N. Y., SEPT. 17, 18, 19, & 20, 1878.

TOGETHER WITH THE

CONFERENCE SERMON,

THE

Constitution and By-Laws of the Conference,

AND A

LIST OF THE DELEGATES.

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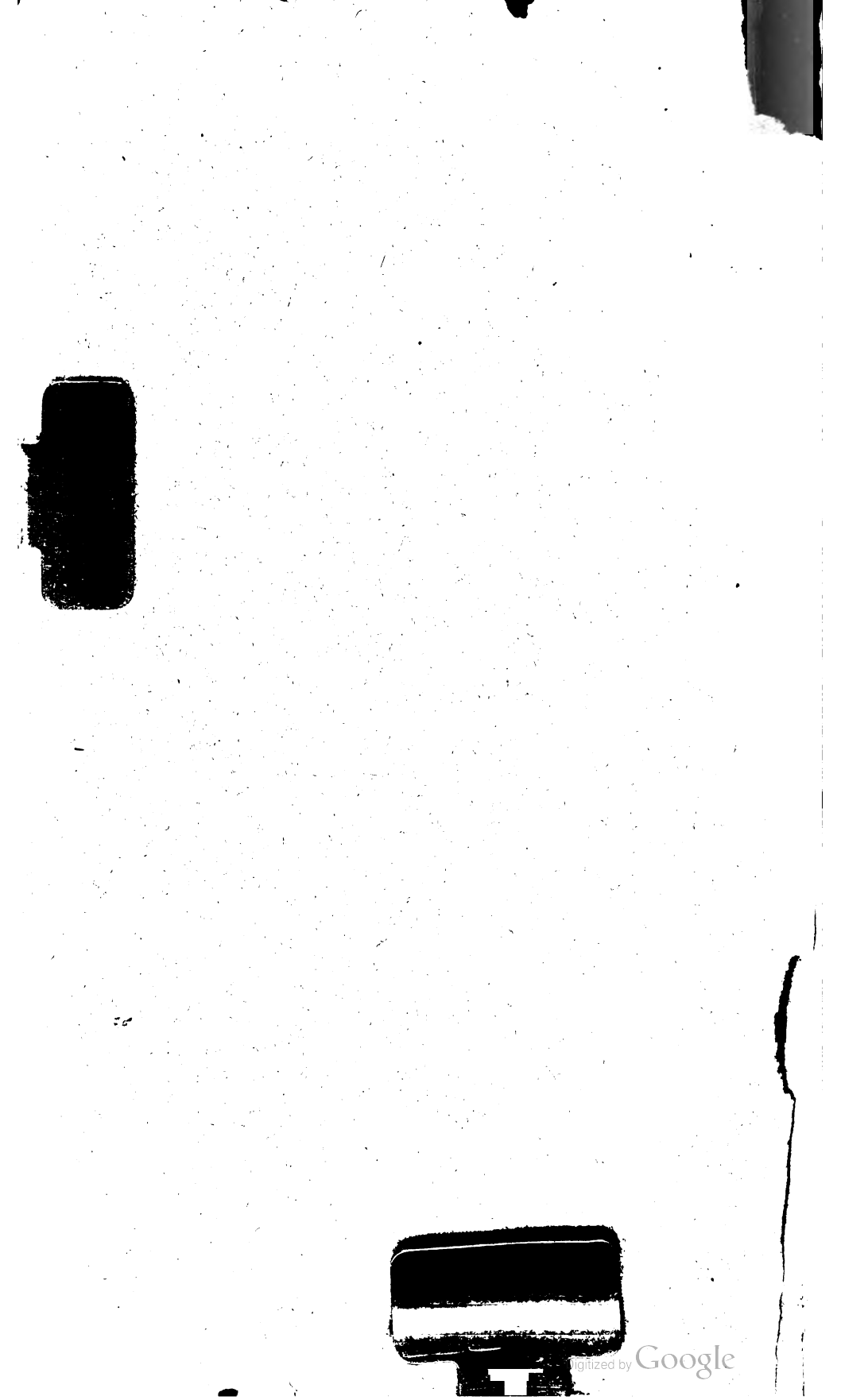
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OUTSPOKENNESS IN RELIGIOUS LIFE.

SERMON

PREACHED BEFORE THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF UNITARIAN AND OTHER CHRISTIAN CHURCHES,

AT SARATOGA, N. Y., SEPT. 17, 1878.

BY REV. BROOKE HERFORD.

II. Cor., 3 : 12.

"*Seeing, then, that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech.*"

Brethren, my subject is, our need of more simple, outspoken religious life. I think this is the special need of liberal Christianity to-day. In all the larger and outward aspects of religion, as we stand facing the great needs and questions of the time, our liberal churches hold a strong position, their thought is fearless and clear, and their word is firm, direct, and—listened to. But we must be conscious that we have no similar fulness and heartiness of utterance on the smaller, inner, more personal side of religion. This is about our weakest side to-day. The high thoughts of our faith want "reducing to lower terms"; they want bringing to bear not only on the lofty problems of science and philosophy, but on the daily needs and cares of struggling, sorrowing, tempted men and women; they want shaping not only into the great utterances of pulpit and press, but into something of an altogether plainer speech; into the language of common life; into the happy

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tones of household piety; into the frank utterance of friend with friend.

In the larger, *external* aspects of religion, our liberal work is already strong and clear. The great thought-currents of the time are setting our way. Society is restless with perplexities and doubts which only our free faith, or some other as free, can meet and satisfy. We have a good hearing for every best word we have in us on these larger topics. The great truths and principles for which we have stood, and long stood alone, are now being adopted by the foremost thinkers in many churches. So much is this the case that, whereas a while ago the doubt among our timid ones was whether we could ever succeed in making a way for our truth, their doubt to-day is whether it would not make way just as well without us! How little place that doubt has among us, however, this convention shows. We are thankful for every testimony to broad and liberal Christianity, no matter whether given in our name or not; but we assuredly have no doubt that *our* witness is needed. Certainly the success which has attended our revived and more affirmative work during the past quarter of a century has been exactly of the kind, not to show us that our work is superfluous, but to encourage us to greater earnestness and activity in it; for our success has been that of an ever-widening and more attentive hearing. Note the quality of that hearing! On every great public religious topic that comes up people have learned to expect about the clearest, strongest, most frank and thoughtful word from the leaders of Unitarianism. Does some great question of theology come to the front, they know that in the Unitarian pulpit they will hear it discussed in its broadest aspects, with no slavish textualism, and with fearless common sense. Is there some

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great crisis of national duty or honor, it is to the Unitarian minister the reporters go for the word that will handle it without gloves and most heartily recognize its relation to Christianity. Is the public feeling outraged by the narrow and intolerant interpretation of Providence which some men are always finding for great calamities, it is to liberal Christianity that the community turns for the ringing common sense which shall expose the mischievous fanaticism, and put the matter in a wholesome, manly light. Are the scientists "fluttering the dovecotes" of theology by some fresh and brilliant raid into the mysterious regions beyond the proper realm of science, it is to some of our broad scholars that society looks for the calm, strong, thoughtful word which shall restore the equilibrium of faith. Nor is it only for these occasional utterances that our churches are listened to: men know that there, year in, year out, they will hear free and thoughtful words, on some topic of large, general interest,—on the great truths of theology, the lives of public men, the interest of new books, the discoveries of science, the history of the past, the controversies of the present, the outlook to the future. Accordingly our churches are the resort of many a restless intellect, of many a lover of mental freedom, and of many an otherwise unchurched doubter.

Well, this is a work to be thankful for, and I think we are thankful for it. And yet when all this is said I suppose we are not satisfied. For this is preponderatingly a ministry of intellect to intellect, and the world wants something more than this, and our faith is good for something more.

The function of religion is not accomplished when it has uttered even the most wise and helpful truth on these great questions. It is not accomplished when it has explained for

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us "the riddle of the painful earth," or made us content to leave it unexplained; when it has dissipated the abstruse definitions of Athanasius or the gloomy decrees of Calvin; nor even when it has taught us that there is no real antagonism between science and faith, and that the hypothesis of evolution still involves the postulate of God. These, after all, are only the difficulties of the meditative few, and religion has in it to be the joy and life of all. The common people should hear it gladly; it should be not only the lamp of studious hours, but the wholesome daylight of busy life. It should dwell with us in the world's common level, and go with us in its common round. It should mingle with our daily life as "a spirit of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." It should be an undertone of happy praise and trust rippling among our manifold occupations, and near enough to the surface to break out now and then into articulate melody. It should be a home-like atmosphere in which the dear relationships of life should find a finer closeness and tenderness and purity. It should be a thought in which the old man and the little child may feel a common interest; to the busy life

> "A central peace subsisting at the heart
> Of endless agitation";

and to pain and sickness the music of "a low, contented song," in which even the harsh discord of death shall pass as a suspended harmony into the firm cadence of triumphant faith. All this is what religion should surely be in the midst of the longing, burdened, struggling life of man.

But how is religion to be all this? It cannot be merely by being made the topic of sermons and lectures. It cannot be by mere public ministry at all. It will need much besides this,—ministries of home, ministries of friendship, frank, un-

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ashamed speech between man and man. Here is where we are weak. Here is where I find the suggestiveness of Paul's word: "Seeing, then, that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech." We want so to feel the blessedness and value of our faith as to be lifted out of our miserable reserve, and learn to speak of it with more earnest freedom and simplicity.

There are several directions in which we need to learn this greater "plainness of speech" about religion.

For one thing, we want it even in our preaching. I have said that our strength at present lies chiefly in our spoken word; and yet even in this we do not manage to have that simplicity which such a faith as ours deserves. Nothing can be more simple than our faith! Faith in God as the great Heavenly Father, stopping at that and refusing to enter into the Trinitarian speculations about the inner mysteries of His being; loving discipleship to the Christ of the gospels, without insisting on any special creed about his nature; the doing of one's duty as the condition of acceptance; an immortality of new and onward life, the very discipline of which is ordained in infinite love and has hope in it for all. Some think that it does not make more way just because it *is* so simple. The multitude love mystery, they say, and they point to the success of other churches whose systems, compared to ours, are a tangle of theological confusion. I am afraid the real explanation is very different. It is, that though it is perfectly true that we have the simpler *doctrines*, it is the other churches that have the simpler *preaching*.

Compare, for instance, liberal Christianity with Methodism in this respect. The professed doctrines of Methodism have been abstruse and complicated. It has held by the whole

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body of Trinitarian theology. But then it has held most of it in the background. What it has put to the front in its actual emphasis has been a few points such as the humblest minds could seize upon,—man's consciousness of sin, God's infinite love for his sinful children, and Christ's death, not in its intricate theological connection, but as the vivid and affecting token of pardon and salvation. These constituted Methodism as it was actually preached by John Wesley and his "brown-bread preachers," and, thus set forth, it was the simplest thing imaginable, and has converted and blessed millions.

Now with Unitarianism it has been exactly the reverse. Our faith is the very simplest of any; and yet such has been the character of our preaching that there is no church that has so managed to produce upon the mind of the people the impression of being a system of high, subtle intellectualism. It seems to me that our thought of the Heavenly Father's free, unpurchased, everlasting love is in itself infinitely more touching than anything our orthodox friends have to tell. But then when God's love is the subject, the Methodist sets it forth as an appeal, while the Unitarian usually works it out as a thesis. In our hands the most touching and beautiful element of religion is apt to become an argument. Instead of preaching the gospel, we preach *about* the gospel. So we miss the deepest longing and need of human souls. Sometimes, I am afraid, we hardly recognize that there *is* such longing and need.

I remember well the incident which first brought me sharply to look upon this matter. I was travelling by rail, a good many years ago, and was looking over a number of tracts and sermons that had recently been published in connection with

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one of our missionary efforts, when a thoughtful-looking man, who had noticed what I was doing, said to me in perfect good faith, "Sir, have you a tract to spare that would help a young friend of mine, who is very sad and anxious under the sense of sin?" Well, I thought that I had tracts for almost everything. I had a tract to prove that God was one and not three, and others against original sin and eternal punishment; I had a most convincing argument against offering prayer to Christ, and a common-sense view of the Bible, and some most eloquent statements of the essential harmony between religion and science, and in fact I had about every theological aspect of our faith plentifully declared,—and yet, as I turned these over, I was uncomfortably conscious that none of them would have much help for a distressed and anxious soul, and I had finally to admit, with some hesitation, that I had *not* one suitable with me! The lesson that I got that day put a new thought and aim into my ministry. It gave me a new sense of the real need of strained and burdened hearts. There are more of these, perhaps, than we are apt to take account of. Look round upon the congregation gathered together any Sunday in any of our city churches. What an amount of weariness, and struggle, and temptation, is represented there. How many of these have been fighting the battle of life the week through; finding it hard work, at times ready to let all go, often tempted to do wrong,—sometimes doing wrong,—none of them perfect, and yet in the main trying to do their work in their place, and to keep some manly stand-up fight for their duty. Is it intellectual disquisitions that these need? Shall we give them the latest thing in criticism or science? Surely this faith of ours has something better in it for them! "Seeing then we have such hope,

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let us use *great plainness of speech.*" Cannot we say something to help the weak and weary to feel the touch of the everlasting presence and the unchangeable love of God; something to set the feet a little firmer on the rock; to renew in the memory the half-forgotten words of the world's mightiest faith; to bring up in the mind's eye the beautiful life of Christ, or arouse the slumbering sense of immortality? I am not speaking now of how our liberal faith might perhaps thus be brought home to the poorer and laboring classes, who at present are almost strangers in our churches. The question of drawing these in among us is complicated by social difficulties and a pride of independence which no mere simplifying of our preaching would much affect. But even taking the very classes who at present form the staple of our parishes, I cannot help believing that our faith might be made more of a helpful and happy reality to them than it at present is, if only we could reduce it to lower terms, bring it down from the intellect to the heart, and set it forth in all its helpful and beautiful light.

The second direction in which we need more simple, outspoken religious life, is that of home. Fifty years ago, Dr. Channing took as the title of one of his sermons, "Unitarian Christianity most Favorable to Piety." How does that sound to-day in the light of the so general disuse among Unitarians of the old observances of home-piety? I know that the disuse of these does not necessarily imply that the spirit of religion is absent or feeble. I know that there are some who have no religious observances at home; who have no family worship, who do not like the use of "grace" at meal-times; who hardly ever say a word to their children about religion, —and yet who at heart are sincerely religious. I remember

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an orthodox preacher visiting me years ago. For a week he went in and out with me among my people, and in our school, and our services and meetings. And when he parted from me, he said, "I have had a curious experience this week. Among my own folks I have always had a fear that there is rather more religion *comes out* than there is *in*; but here I have kept feeling that there is more religion in than comes out." I believe he was right, and of the two extremes better this than the other. But still we carry this reserve altogether too far. If some people put reflectors round about their piety to make it show for more, that is no reason for our hiding ours under a bushel to keep it from showing at all. "Let your light shine," was Christ's word; and home is just one of those places where surely, if anywhere, it ought to shine out with a sweet, natural openness. The very nature of home pleads for religion to have not only a place there, but an open and acknowledged place. Home is one of the great centres around which life groups itself,—a little society complete in itself, with its own little world of joy and sorrow, and from which influences of quiet, wonderful power radiate through humanity. We look up to God as the great Father of all; our whole human society culminates in that relation, and the larger gathering of the Church expresses it. Is it not fitting that the united life of the family should also culminate in the sense of his being the Father of all the families of the earth? And should it not do this openly? We all love frank and open life together in our homes; we do not like secretiveness there. Should we then have such secretiveness in our home-religion? Should we not have an *open* piety? It is this I look to, most of all: the keeping alive in a household, between father, and mother, and chil-

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dren, and even servants and guests, the sense of a little divine fellowship in home, that they are not merely lodging together, but have a sacred home-life together—God the giver of it and the head of it,—and that this innermost grouping of the world's fellowship should be sanctified by some simple occasional fellowship of adoration. And the religious instincts of the world have recognized the fitness and the need of this. The usages of open home-piety are as ancient and universal as those of the Church or the temple. People speak sometimes as if home worship was something "Methodistical." There could not be a greater mistake. Wesley did indeed revive religion in the homes of his followers; but it was no new thing; it was only the revival of what had always revived in men's homes when it had revived in their churches.

It was so with Puritanism in its best days. It was so on the inner side of the Lutheran Reformation. Look at the sweet home-life of early Christianity. And that early Christianity, with its simple rejoicing pieties, did but take up the best spirit of the old Hebrew household life. When Christ, as he took bread, "gave thanks," he only did what he had been used to do from childhood, and, moreover, what, in some rude way—casting a morsel in the fire or on the floor,—the idol-worshippers of Greece, and Rome, and all ancient lands, had done from the very childhood of the world. And so the heathens with their household gods, and Abraham sacrificing at each camping-ground on his rude pile of stones, are but the ancient types of that piety of the Christian home which Burns describes in his "Cotter's Saturday Night," and which prompted Baxter's noble saying, "Wherever I have a home, there God shall have an altar."

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I plead, therefore, for religion in the home, and not merely for the spirit of it, but for that spirit to have earnest, simple expression and culture!

I plead for *family prayer*. That in this busy, hurrying life of to-day, and all the more because it is so busy and so hurrying, there be that daily pause that our fathers had; that quieting of the hearts of all together into the thought of God, with some old Bible-word, it may be, to set the key-note of the day, and the humble bending in common prayer.

I plead for the old *family Bible*. Said a poor woman to me, once, in one of my Manchester mission districts, when I called to change a tract: "Oh yes, here it is; I always keep it with the rent-book, in the Bible; then it's sure not to be disturbed." I could find Bibles in other than poor men's homes,—Bibles beautiful with brightest clasps and binding, prominent ornaments on parlor-tables, that would also be better if they were "disturbed" a little oftener, opened with the little children round, that they might learn where to find the best of the old-world stories, or their favorite verses in psalm and gospel.

I plead for *home psalmody*. I do not know any memories that cling more sweetly to one's life than those of quiet Sunday evenings in the old home, when young and old gathered round, and each had some favorite hymn to ask for. Have those old times been quite banished by the modern fashion of the church-music being confined to a quartette and the congregation praising God by proxy?

And I plead, too, for the old custom of *grace before meat*, —just a word of thanksgiving for daily bread. I plead for this almost more emphatically than for prayers or hymns, because it is within the reach of all. Some people, in these

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progressive days, have got—or think they have—beyond praying, and it is not every one who *can* sing. But even the most "advanced" have hardly got beyond feeling thankful, and every one could speak a simple word of thanks. I know it is easy to raise objections. Probably there is no religious usage which has suffered more from ridicule. In some homes they never have it except when a minister is present to say it, which always looks as if it was said out of compliment to the minister rather than out of gratitude to God. Besides, why single out one's food to be particularly thankful for? Charles Lamb said he would sooner say grace for a good book than for a good dinner. Say grace in your heart for every blessing you have; there is no danger of too much thankfulness. But my point is, that it is good for this general spirit of thanksgiving to come to the surface in some open fashion now and then. And, if it is so, then there is no better occasion for it than these common daily mercies. For, just because they *are* so common, they are in more danger of being taken as matter of course; and just because they are enjoyed by all the family together, they furnish the better opportunity—say, once a day when the family are *most* together—for a united remembrance of the good providence of life. Yes, the more you look into it, the more you will see the real worth and fitness of a reverent custom, which in one form or another is almost as old as the world, and which is so simple that it may be repeated even by a little child.

Some of you might tell me, perhaps, that you are afraid of religion suffering by all this familiar handling at home. These morning or evening prayers, these little sentences of thanksgiving, are so apt to become mere forms. I quite

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grant it, though I do not think there is more danger of home-prayers becoming formal than of church-prayers becoming so. Still they *are* forms, and we cannot be sure of their being always vivified by the living spirit. But what of that? We have forms all through life, such forms, *e. g.*, as those by which we try to keep alive among men the sense of our various relations to each other. You say, "How are you?" when you meet your friend, and "Good-by," when you leave him. You teach your children to say "Good morning, father" or "mother," and to ask for things with "If you please" and "Thank you." You do not teach your children to say these things only when they mean just those very words, and feel them; on the contrary, you want them to *form the habit* of saying them. The habit *helps* the spirit. Life would be intolerable if every word and action had to be the result of new and separate thought. Habit is the fly-wheel of life; it does not supply the place of thought and effort, but enables us, when our life is in the right track, to keep in it with rather less of effort. And the divine relation of our lives simply follows the same law as these human relations. If we want to keep alive the sense of this divine relationship we must form the habit of acknowledging and referring to it. The household's prayer or grace is the household's greeting to the great Father. It may seldom be perfectly meant; still, it helps us to keep Him in mind, and helps to recall the family day by day to something of the sense of trying—not separately, but together—to do right and to love God. I am sure there is a blessing in it. Religion openly acknowledged by all the family together, helps to keep the home-life up to its true pitch. It keeps the home-affections more delicate and pure; it softens the little house-

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hold strifes and jars and worries; it breathes into parent and child the spirit of kindlier helpfulness and happier content; and when trials and sorrows come, as come they will at times, in every family, it makes it easier alike to young and old to speak out their deepest word of mutual comfort, and to reach out together to the higher comfort still. And so, through all our comings and goings, and sunshine and shadow, it brings a richer, closer life, and helps all our changing days

—"to be
Linked each to each by natural piety."

There is yet a third direction in which this grand liberal faith of ours should teach us more of this "plainness of speech." I mean in personal religious intercourse and fellowship, in frank converse between friend and friend, and in being ready to speak an open, unashamed word for our religious convictions. I cannot help thinking that we have carried individualism in religion to an extreme. We have lost sight of the help to religious life which there is in frank interchange of thought and experience. We say that religion is a thing simply between each man and his Maker. So it is, in its inmost essence; but, for its culture, it is something which should be also between man and man. That was a wise word the old man gave to John Wesley when he was wearing his heart out in the lonely struggles of his first deep convictions: "Sir, the Bible knows nothing of solitary religion." It was out of that word came all that net-work of close, brotherly fellowship, by which early Methodism strengthened its new converts, and helped to keep them on their feet. Perhaps some of our evangelical friends have carried this too far. We do not want any spiritual inquisition. We do not want to have people coming round and asking us or our chil-

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dren whether we have found Jesus,—to which, perhaps, the best answer is that which the little child gave to the revivalist: "Why, I didn't know that he was lost."

I know that it is partly dread of this kind of thing, a shrinking from anything approaching to religious ostentation or cant, that has led us as a body into the opposite fault of undue reserve. Partly, too, it arises from the very independence of mind which Unitarianism fosters, without which, indeed, a man could hardly be a Unitarian, and which makes men more able to stand alone, and less disposed to lean up against each other for religious sympathy. I know, too, the natural shrinking of busy men of the world from any distinct avowal of religious faith. And yet, in the extent to which this reticence is carried among us, is it not almost a lack of religious manliness? Our very individualism should teach us better! Look at this: Unitarianism is *in theory* about the most individual, the least sacerdotal, of all religions. It does not admit that ministers are anything more than laymen. But *in practice* Unitarians are about the most dependent of any on their ministers, the most utterly helpless for any religious action or service unless the minister is at hand. So, it is too much a one-man-ministry in our churches, and no ministry at all out of them. This is not from lack of convictions. There is not one of our churches but has among its members men of the very finest thought and feeling and sincerity. But this morbid reserve seals their lips. "We have no religion—to speak of"—they say. A good reply, as it was first given; but as a word to take as a sort of motto, and even rather to pride oneself upon, a false and mischievous word! "No religion to speak of," when society is faint and sick for the very word which has been given to us that we might

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speak it? "No religion to speak of," when the young are growing up about us in our homes and churches all adrift and perplexed for lack of it?

Why, only see how all this is dwarfing and hindering our work to-day. See how it prevents our churches from being the religious help and power they might be to the multitudes who are drifting away from the old orthodox moorings. They are longing for some religious home, and they ought to find it with us. Perhaps they try. They are attracted by our common-sense doctrines, and by our frank, manly freedom. They come in among us, often with a glad, earnest enthusiasm. But what do they find? Where is the fellowship they looked for in these religious thoughts which are so interesting to them? Where are the meetings, such as they have been used to, for mutual help in religious life? They have looked for a religious home, and they find themselves in an upland theological pasture, the chilliness of which is poorly compensated for by the fact that all its gates are left absolutely open! The more we eschew all gates and fences, the more do we need a warm centre of brotherly fellowship at the heart of our intellectual freedom.

But I think this constitutional reticence is most injurious to the younger folks about us. It makes our churches powerless to help these, just when they most need help, at the very turning-point of life. To all young people there come times of religious awakening. The heart arouses itself out of the heedless life of youth; it is stirred by the longing for nobler things; it is perplexed by new doubts; perhaps it is sad in the sense of sin; it craves sympathy, and yet is ashamed and afraid to seek it. Now our orthodox friends watch for these seasons of soul-awakening and provide for

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them. The first sign is noticed. Older friends speak with kind openness, and often the young heart is helped through its struggles and difficulties, and led to convictions and resolutions which permanently change the life. But see how it is among us. Our young people grow up in this atmosphere of reserve. They do not hear religion talked about at home, at least not in any earnest, experimental way. They grow up, feeling as if it was something not to be spoken of. Piety is left to take care of itself. No one watches for the "tides of the spirit." The consequence is, that when the new strange movements of feeling come to them, there is no one to whom they can open their hearts. They have never talked with father or mother even, and shrink from doing so. I cannot help thinking that this is the reason why we often lose our young people just when their real Christian life should be beginning; for the opportunity we neglect is readily enough seized by others. Orthodoxy affectionately urges that Unitarianism is dangerous and wrong. Skepticism suggests doubts whether all religion is not nonsense. Is it wonderful that, between these two, the liberalism, which, with the noblest word to speak, holds back from any speech at all, fails to hold its own? The wonder would be if it were otherwise!

All this wants altering. These great thoughts and truths of ours are not given to be merely the light of solitary thought, but for the happy converse of friendship and the frank intercourse of home. I like that word which our "free religious" friends have taken for their motto: "Freedom *and Fellowship* in Religion." Only, let us have this in its fulness; not "fellowship" only among those who hold different faiths or no faith. Suppose we have a little more fellow-

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ship with each other, a little more trust to speak out our best beliefs. Is there no lesson for us in that old word that has come down from Moses' time, about those great thoughts that he gave his people? "These things which I command thee this day shall be in thine heart, and thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." It was but the law and faith of Israel that Moses and his people had to talk of. Shall we not be at least as glad and earnest in speaking of these brighter, larger truths, which Christ has given us,—truths which we humbly think we see in clearer light than most?

O friends, brethren of our many churches, near and far, I feel that here are the lessons that we most need to-day. I make no apology for not taking up any of the larger and more striking topics of the time. There is no fear of our neglecting these. Keen eyes are looking all along the horizon of the future. Many a strong word will interpret for you its signs. Bear with me that out of the quiet past I have brought you some of those thoughts which in the rush of progress are always in danger of being forgotten. Bear with me that in these opening hours of this Conference about our work I have urged upon you some of the deep, innermost conditions of doing any effective work at all. And for our work's sake I urge them; that work is so needed. Still, among all the restless movements of the world, the one thing needful to lift humanity out of all its doubt and woe and sin, is the simple religion of Jesus Christ. A great, plain, loving word it wants to be,—a word not for pastors only but for all. "It takes the whole Church to preach the whole gos-

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pel." The world is ready for us, but are we ready for the world? It is not great success I look for. I do not know that that is ever likely to be ours. I do not shrink from insignificance if it be the insignificance of those mean things by which God silently builds up the future. I am not afraid of the reproach of few coming to us; but I do always tremble lest those who do come, attracted by our light of freedom, should find no glow of love and prayer, and sink into less care about religious things than when they came. May we be saved from such a shame as that! Nay, with such a word as ours to speak shall we "put a veil" either upon our hearts or over our lips? Rather let that nobler part be ours, that "open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord." Yes, such "open face" of faith in God and love to man that we may be changed by what we look at, and all our coldness and feebleness and timidity may fall from us, till we go "even as by the spirit of the Lord," if not "from glory unto glory," at least from strength to strength!

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REPORT OF THE COUNCIL,

BY THE CHAIRMAN,

REV. HENRY W. BELLOWS, D. D.,

OF NEW YORK.

I. THE COUNCIL — ITS MEMBERS, AND ITS LIMITED DUTIES AND OPPORTUNITIES.

The Council of the National Conference of Unitarian and other Christian Churches have very little of a business nature to report. Their duties have been light, their meetings few, their opportunities of forwarding the general interests of the body they represent inconsiderable during the two years past. Mr. S. E. Spring, of Portland, Me., appointed one of the Council at the last session, declined the office, and the Council elected Mr. John Kebler, of Cincinnati, in his place. Gov. Padelford, one of the Vice Presidents, is lately deceased, regretted for his long devotion to our cause and his excellent personal character and Christian zeal.

II. COMMITTEE OF FELLOWSHIP.

A Committee of Fellowship, which the Conference had made a part of its plan of work, it neglected from pure oversight and pressure of business to appoint; and the Council fulfilled the purpose of the Conference by choosing such a committee, and recommending certain duties and a division of labor among them. The names of this excellently constituted committee will be found in the list of the officers of the Conference, on the second page of the report of the seventh meeting. The Council has never heard from this committee, and cannot expect a report. It has probably found, like the Council, much to think of and little to do,—not from disrespect to the wishes

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of the Conference, nor from indifference to the cultivation of fellowship with other Christian bodies; but simply because the breadth of our fellowship is so well-known, so genuinely felt by our churches, so fully recognized by the Christian world, that it perhaps needs not to be made a matter of formal business, and cannot be much advanced by a special committee. Our entire body is itself a committee of the whole for the promotion of Christian fellowship and union, upon undogmatic grounds, among all Christians.

III. THE WASHINGTON CHURCH MOVEMENT.

The only definite measure of practical importance enjoined by the Conference on the Council — the furtherance of the scheme for the erection of the church at Washington — has, through the labors of the Secretary of the American Unitarian Association, which have been specially marked in this instance, and by the vigorous direction of the Association, with the advice and support of the Council, and the activity of Mr. Willard, chairman of the building committee at Washington, been fully achieved. The history of the movement — slow and tedious, long baffled and often almost abandoned, but at last swiftly and happily concluded — is fully known to the members of the National Conference. Still a record of it must be made here of an official kind. The church at Washington is built and paid for. It is consecrated and occupied by a large and flourishing congregation, under a minister of its own choice, whom it liberally supports without aid from any outside quarter. It has even contributed something this year to the funds of the American Unitarian Association. The erection of a beautiful and commodious church, on a site already found to be central and convenient, and the freeing it from all debt, has operated with even more advantage than had been predicted. The pews have been almost entirely taken, and by a class of families that have at once raised the society above all social disadvantages. It might be safely said, that nobody is now deterred from joining the Unitarian society in Washington by any dread of social penalties, or from any sway of public prejudice. Experience in the past has taught us that these mean fears have alienated from our worship congressmen and cabinet officers, and even judges, known at home to be of our opinions. That is no longer the case; and though it be a somewhat humble cause for rejoicing, we have not had

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so many better reasons that we can afford to make light even of this. More encouraging than the presence of many official dignitaries is the largeness of the attendance at two services, every Sunday, of strangers from distant parts of the country, and the active demand for our tracts by genuine inquirers. Washington proves to be what the resolute friends of this movement had long declared it, one of our most important missionary fields. We have never undertaken any enterprise where our hopes have been so completely exceeded by the immediate result. It is due to the Washington congregation to say, that the residents have done their half of the joint work in a faithful and generous spirit, and that the whole movement is placed upon a footing equally favorable to their independent congregational life, and to the security of the property under all contingencies.

IV. THE MINISTERS' INSTITUTE.

One other suggestion, which came rather from the spirit of the last session than from any definite instruction,—the formation of a *Ministers' Institute*, to meet on alternate years with the National Conference,—has been very successfully carried out. Under a committee of five ministers, appointed by the Council, a simple plan of organization and a careful scheme of work were drawn up, the object being to promote the study and diffuse the results of scientific theology among our own ministers; that is, theology studied under the rules which are universally adopted in the pursuit of truth, in all other departments of human inquiry. The generous hospitality of our church in Springfield, Mass., was offered to the first meeting of the Ministers' Institute thus formed. The convenient and central position of the place, and the often tested liberality of the Unitarian society and the town, influenced the choice of Springfield as the city in which this doubtful experiment was to be put on its first trial. It held its first session September, 1877. Notwithstanding the care with which the programme of subjects and of lectures was prepared, extreme solicitude was felt lest the attendance of ministers might not equal the number deemed essential to the success of the enterprise. Various objections, entertained and expressed by respected brethren, it was feared might have more force than the projectors of the undertaking had originally counted on. Some thought the scheme reflected upon the competency and sufficiency of our theological schools; others that

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questions would be started that must give rise to idle debate; others that the call upon experts in various branches of ecclesiastical history or Biblical criticism, to instruct their peers in age and ministerial standing, would be resented by some, and deemed superfluous by others; while others saw peril and disturbance in the very phrase *scientific* as applied to theology; and others, equal peril in the new importance attached to theology itself in a denomination whose endeavors for half a century had been to establish the supremacy of practical religion and the non-essential character of theological distinctions and refinements; others feared that the purely *ministerial* composition of the Institute would alarm the instincts of the laity, who might suspect some esoteric or strictly professional mysteries to be brewing, of which they were not to be made equal partakers.

Greatly to the gratification of the committee, who, it must be confessed, were seriously disappointed and almost confounded by the reception first given by the public organs of our denomination to the plan, and who worked on, hoping against hope, in their endeavors to prepare a worthy programme and worthy expounders of it, the attendance of our ministers exceeded more than two-fold their calculations. There were present about one hundred and twenty-five; and certainly a more interesting and instructive ministerial meeting was never held in our body. None of the difficulties anticipated occurred. There was no jealousy shown of the plan, and there was no idle debate. Instead of hasty, off-hand criticism on the floor of the lecturers, there was instead private comparison of views and private questioning of the essayists, for which ample time was afforded after each paper. The amount of thought exchanged among the ministers during the four days of the Institute was exceptionally large and profitable. The interest of the general public in the meeting was inconsiderable; but the number of thoughtful persons of both sexes from the laity who came as inquirers, and for purposes of instruction, and from considerable distances, was a marked feature of the meetings. All plans of exclusion of any persons from any portion of the meetings excepting purely business sessions, based on grounds of prudence, or fears of hampering the freedom of the essayists and experts, were practically abandoned. It was felt that nothing that serious men in the ministerial calling can reverently wish to say to each other, as the last results of their studies, can be unfit or dangerous to say in the presence of that portion of the laity who have interest enough in

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theological questions to desire to attend upon such conferences. No doubt there were a few utterances at the Ministers' Institute which surprised and shocked some not familiar with the broad range of modern speculation or the results of critical inquiries; but nobody is permanently hurt by the disturbance of his prejudices, or even the shock given to his ignorance. Every step in the progress of rational thinking in religion has been in the direction of what alarmists have called a bottomless precipice. Our Unitarian faith is the product of a series of courageous doubts and questionings of things long deemed by most too well established and too divinely attested to be even examined with open eyes and ungloved hands. Our most conservative Unitarianism was deadly infidelity in its origin. Our reverent starters upon the track we have since logically pursued, and in as good a spirit as theirs, were freely called atheists when they had departed only by the smallest angle from the furrow the church councils had ploughed down as the boundary-line of safe teaching. The shocking of creeded prejudices and mere church assumptions, the questioning of improved opinions, and the testing of hasty inferences from imperfect data, are duties that concern and involve the religious progress of mankind, and even the determination of the nature and character, as well as the preservation of our priceless Christianity. As a denomination we are pledged to absolute freedom; to limitless faith in the safety of free inquiry. License in thinking has no meaning for us, any more than toleration for opinions. It is not free thinking that does, or *can* do, any harm; it is only no thinking, or want of sufficient thinking, that can establish and perpetuate error. Error we have, and must always have, so long as we possess only finite intelligences; but error established by law, or maintained by persecution, and sanctified by superstitious reverence, we need not have; and it is only that form of error that is fatal to moral and spiritual growth. (Intellectual errors, the intellect, freely exercised, always tends to rectify or abate; but when conscience and reverence adopt intellectual errors, and pronounce them sacred, it is not intellectual truth that is most injured, but moral honesty and religious life.)

"The Ministers' Institute" is a scheme that aims to promote scholarly, fearless, free investigation in matters of Christian faith and religious opinion. It aims to bring together the last results of the investigations of all the schools, abroad and at home, where theology is pursued in a scientific spirit, and to present them in a systematic

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and intelligible form to those of our ministers who lack time or cannot afford the purchase of the books necessary to come at the results of these inquiries at first hand. But what is scientific theology? The scientific method as applied to religion and Christianity; and its record is simply the use of the ways and means, the rules and tests, recognized as alone profitable and successful in acquiring sure and definite knowledge in all other departments of human inquiry to this greatest of all interests. Because religion has departments in which indefiniteness and mystery must always remain, which is equally true of external nature, it is not to be assumed that a large part of its truths and facts cannot be defined and brought within the scope of positive knowledge. To leave to prejudice and guess, to sect and party, what can be surely and positively defined as true, or demonstrated as false, is weak, if not wicked. *There is positive truth* to be known in religion, and there is much that *is now* positively known which is hidden, or taught only in a tentative and timid temper, but which ought to be formulated and exactly taught to our children; and this is all in the interest of liberal Christianity, of purer morals, of loftier faith, and a more genuine worship of the Sublime and Holy Source of our Being. Text-books for the young are now slowly preparing which will ultimately make our Sunday-school instruction positive, and such as will leave positive knowledge for its result, and redeem the Sunday-school from the doubtful respect in which it is now held by minds that unite intellectual clearness and discipline with devout feeling. The Ministers' Institute is to pioneer this all-important movement, which is destined to reduce to system the vagueness of our religious teachings of children and youth, and even of the pulpit, and in the end make the progress of our cause not a contention with opposing sects, but of demonstrated and clearly expounded knowledge against traditional credulity and addresses to popular ignorance and superstition.

Let none of the members of the National Conference be alarmed, then, at the application of the term scientific to theology, as if religion were going to be driven from the stronghold of faith in man's spiritual instincts. It is the reliableness of the spiritual instincts, it is the legitimacy of faith, which metaphysics and philosophy are now engaged in establishing. Exact science is bravely and faithfully limiting the domain within which mere physics has any ultimate authority. And in the *in*exact sciences what cannot be demonstrated must always

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remain the noblest and the largest part of human inspiration. It is only by science that what *is* not and cannot be science, our relations to God and futurity, will yet be put upon the basis of probability; while probability, and not what is proved, will be shown to be the necessary condition of the finite aspiring to be infinite,—the only conceivable attitude of moral and adolescent beings towards the Absolute and Perfect One. A scientific theology will survey and protect the domain of faith, and will end in a practical religion. It will reduce dogmas to their proper dimensions; puncture the swollen pretension of mere sounding propositions that have crowded tender and modest faiths out of the minds of men; give new authority to the spiritual senses and to vision at first hand of such sacred simplicities of faith as must and do content honest and brave thinkers, in place of those misformed rows of showy articles and creeded make-beliefs that have been the tin-soldiers of the childhood of the church militant. It is impossible for liberal Christianity to perform its mission in the world by anything less than a more thorough conquest of the truth, a more scholarly and more intellectual grasp of ecclesiastical and dogmatic problems, and a bolder and clearer discrimination between what is essential and what is accidental and transitory. We have owed all that is beneficent in our past history and services to the Church and the world, to our freedom in the application of the intellect to moral, spiritual, and theological questions. The liberalism that separates itself from philosophic and scientific culture soon becomes formal, lifeless, and dead; or wild, sentimental, and magical. It dooms itself on the one hand to the same fate which Quakerism has so nearly experienced—the mightiest, bravest, purest of spiritual movements in its origin, rich in mystic faith and in practical fruits, but too early dissociated from *thought*, inactive on the intellectual side and quietistic in its expectation of spiritual motion as originating from the other side only—the fate of falling into one of the most formal, barren, and hopeless of movements, left behind on the sands, high and dry, as the stream has flowed on. On the other hand, it encounters the doom of those modern theurgic, emotional, and neuralgic systems, in which liberalism has lost so much credit, without always daring or caring to express its distrust for a blindness that was accompanied with so many cheerful and comforting hopes, and associated with such unorthodox opinions. There is no longer any vital connection between even those supposedly cognate branches of the Christian church that,

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agreeing in certain theological opinions, were supposed for a long time to be braided together in their fortunes, and destined to a future union. Exceptional sympathies exist between individual members of these several bodies, (Christian, Universalist, Unitarian), but the separation grows wider, not by any plan or fault on either side, but simply because Unitarians believe with all their minds in the wholesomeness of applying the intellect to religious problems, and welcoming light from every kind of culture; and the other bodies do not. They are founded on the written word, and we on the eternal word which never can be stereotyped. Excepting the eternal foundations and claims of the Spirit of God and faith in the Gospel of Christ, there is no remaining ground of union left among liberal Christians, except union in their faith in the absolute freedom of man's intellect in its relation to religious truth. Trust in this freedom has carried us safely over difficulties that a temporary panic, in respect of our original principle, involved us in, when we were for years divided into conservatives and radicals, who really dreaded, if they did not hate, each other. We were beneficially tided over this threatening shoal, or dividing ledge, only by the slow, sure rise of a biblical and scientific culture, that floated us all above the sands and rocks that threatened to separate us, and wreck our common vessel.

On these grounds, the Council have thought it one of their most important duties to report the success of the Ministers' Institute in its first meeting; to explain its objects, and suggest the reasons of its usefulness, and thus to ask for it the more complete sympathy and support of this body.

V. PRESENT CONDITION OF THE UNITARIAN BODY.

One of the duties of the Council, expressed in the Fourth By-law, is, to keep itself instructed on the condition and affairs of the denomination, and to report upon the general condition of our Body, "that the Conference may know what the wants and wishes of the churches are, somewhat more particularly than it is possible to learn in the necessary hurry of the biennial meeting."

1. *The Internal Condition of the Churches.*—In regard to the state and progress of our Unitarian body, during the last two years, the Council have to congratulate the National Conference that under a somewhat desperate depression of business, affecting the outlays of

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all classes, there has been no marked decline in the denominational or congregational interests of the body. The annual income of the American Unitarian Association has stood at about the average notch in the scale of ten years past. The demands of enfeebled churches have increased, with less ability to meet them only because the fund of the American Unitarian Association has been somewhat concentrated upon an object which the Conference had placed *first* on the list of its missionaries' aims. It is important to consider that only about so much money will be annually poured or dribbled into the treasury of our denominational agency, and that no special pecuniary effort, such as the outlay on the Washington church, can, in times like these, be kept wholly, or even to any considerable extent, supplementary to our general collection. The money given to the Washington church was, with small exceptions, given in place of what would have been given to the general purposes of the Association. Thus the American Unitarian Association has been crippled for two years in its general missionary work, by the necessity of giving more than one-third of its receipts to the Washington church. The Council have no doubt that the establishment of the church at the Capital well justifies the saving policy practised by the American Unitarian Association in its contributions to needy societies and to new missionary enterprises. The American Unitarian Association, indeed, has had no option in the matter, being compelled to follow the lead of the denomination, as expressed in its general convention. If the Unitarian body, here assembled, wishes the American Unitarian Association to be a more active missionary body, engaged in diffusing our opinions not merely by the printed word, which it vigorously employs, but by living voices, in those regions where churches of our faith do not at present exist, then it must not only distinctly say so, but it must supply the means of supporting competent missionaries and of aiding young societies at the start by a much larger and a more general annual contribution, and one in which no one considerable enterprise, of a special and exceptional sort, shall swallow up so great a part of the resources of the Association.

Now it is pretty clear that the feeling of the denomination, in the portions where money exists and is alone to be drawn upon, is not very favorable, and especially in these times, to large collections for general missionary purposes. It has not been steadily favorable at any time in the last twenty years, simply because our missionary

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hopes had before that been so often swollen and then suffered collapse; because our hopeful leaders made promises which they could not redeem, and had to *renew*, until their creditors were tired out; and because our churches capable of giving much exist in a region where liberal Christianity has largely done its work, and found itself somewhat superseded as a mission of religious light by other and wider agencies. Furthermore, the wants of our churches in New England and the Middle States, and the causes for anxiety there, are very different from those which concern the new converts or the new societies; or the feelings of Unitarians isolated, and in contact with vast bodies of active and aggressive orthodoxy in its old and virulent form, such as we hardly know has any existence on the narrow Atlantic side of the mountains. We must do careful and discriminating justice to both sides of this question,—the side of the old and settled churches, and the side of the new and more enterprising and more missionary part of our constituency.

The zeal of the settled Unitarian laity, and of its characteristic minister, is less and less of a sectarian kind; it is not even largely of a specially religious kind, if religion is to be regarded chiefly as a means of rectifying man's relations to his Maker, and of ensuring his own future salvation. The zeal which is natural, genuine, and widespread in our body, and grows out of our principles and opinions, is a zeal for human welfare, and the promotion of all interests (secular, educational, philanthropic, patriotic, moral), which in any way affect the well-being of the country, the community, the race. Nothing is more certain than this, that in good citizenship, in the support of practical institutions of education and benevolence, Unitarian laymen are foremost in every community where our opinions have any fair representation. Indeed, rival sects are fond of acknowledging that Unitarians are among the very best of citizens, neighbors, philanthropists, reformers, patriots; but it is equally certain that they are behind all considerable denominations in ecclesiastical, or dogmatic, or sectarian zeal. They are less concerned to bring other communities to their way of thinking on the subject of religion, less willing to make sacrifices to get a footing in new towns, less ready to engage in tentative missionary enterprises. It must be a curious subject of satisfaction to our enemies, and doubtless is the natural source of the very confident prejudice existing among Trinitarian, or so-called orthodox organs, that our influence and our opinions are rapidly declin-

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ing, to observe the fewness of the numbers and the character of the audience in attendance, say upon the annual meetings of the American Unitarian Association, whether the business or the general meeting in Boston. The conspicuous absence of the leading citizens of Boston, known to be foremost in all good works, and of Unitarian opinions, and of the elder and established ministers of the city and neighborhood, proves not, indeed, that our churches are dead or our cause declining, but that our churches in the East are not in deep earnest, or in warm sympathy, with missionary objects. The real fact is, that other influences are in that community, so moderating and qualifying theological opinions and sectarian bitterness, sweetening, softening, and giving a practical quality to faith, that the old reasons for theological and ecclesiastical zeal are almost wholly undermined. Zeal for religious opinions will naturally be left to those who think correct opinions essential to salvation, or who identify the welfare of society with the success of their own denomination. Then there is a growing conviction in the East that liberal opinions are no longer confined to churches called liberal; or, if they are held on to in the creed or confession, are abandoned in the pews. If Unitarians in our older communities anywhere suffered much from social ostracism or religious persecution, or if, in these days, the religious opinions of most large communities were not more settled by taste, convenience, accident, and habit, than by argument, we should have zeal enough of the old sort. But now it almost seems to men in New York or Boston, who do their own thinking, a sort of trifling to ask their interest in a religious newspaper of their own opinions,—to demand their attention to the wants of some little offshoot of their faith, which, whether it live or die, they do not really think a matter of public importance. They will give *something* to it out of respect to the wishes or the urgency of their minister, or to support the liberal repute of their society; but they do not give heartily, or with any serious care for the end proposed. The fact is, we have almost educated our New England laity out of the possibility of a zeal for the diffusion of liberal opinions in matters of religion by CHURCH MEANS. They see and feel that opinions in their own community are taking care of themselves, and are becoming liberal fast enough. What concerns the serious-minded among them is to see moral and religious influences made more efficient in the churches where liberal opinions are now existent. They often run away, and from no change of

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opinions, but in apparent indifference to them, from Unitarian churches to Episcopal and other orthodox churches, to find, as they represent, a more worshipful climate, heartier singing, a livelier participation in the service, a greater interest in the children and in the young. Ask these renegades if they have changed their opinions, and they frankly tell you, No! but they profess that their wives, or their daughters, or their children, are more interested either in the Sunday-school or the service, and that they themselves either care nothing about so-called theological distinctions, or prefer a great congregation worshipping with apparent sympathy and enjoyment by a wrong creed to a *thin* meeting in a cold worship, barren and dull, though after the most correct and approved style of opinion.

It would be a great mistake to suppose that opinions were really less important or less progressive on account of these appearances to the contrary. All that is true is, that *church creeds* have in New England, perhaps, become so meaningless and without practical consequences that a man of liberal views would just as soon hear them announced in a perfunctory way by an official minister as not. They have no power to hinder his own thinking, and are not intended to have. And, in the successful and attractive ministry of those who still officially profess them, they are often found to have next to no influence over their preaching. Notwithstanding this anomaly, there never was a time when religious opinions were so freely and radically discussed, or were really so important and so thoroughly in a process of revolution in New England as now. But it is not in churches, nor by ministers only, nor in ecclesiastical forms, that they are discussed; but in reviews, magazines, newspapers, novels; on piazzas by the sea, and in view of the mountains, in cars and parlors — everywhere and in all relations, sooner and more than in ecclesiastical assemblies or in professed theological papers. It is getting to be felt indeed in academic circles that the ministerial profession in some degree disqualifies a man from having and avowing the opinions best worth considering even in matters of religion. His views, it is said, have an official tang, a narrowness of experience, or a constraint of custom or policy, which makes many thoughtful laymen discount them at a heavy figure. Under this state of things men who still think religious institutions very important on general grounds, and public worship a grave public necessity, as well as of unspeakable urgency in the reverential education of the young, keep their opinions in one

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pigeon-hole and their church-bills in another; adapting their church action or fellowships to what promotes worship and upholds flourishing religious institutions, without much regard to opinions. No priest, no creed, no bishop, no ritual, shall make them *personally* believe what they have long ago fully thought themselves out of. But they *must* worship where worship is attractive to their children, or dignified and interesting in itself—not from the opinions expressed, but the sympathetic, or æsthetic, or symbolic, or rich and varied character of the service.

In this state of things the Council cannot but think that the maintenance and prosperity of our denomination in its home field—a thing very different from the extension of our opinions—depends largely upon the improvement of our worship, and the spiritual and religious influences promotive of reverence thrown about the young. In the indifference of old communities, not to opinions, but to *ecclesiastical declarations* of opinion, to church discipline or pulpit assertions, people will seek churches where the worship is most attractive, with less and less regard to merely official creeds. For a while *social* attractions had a deciding influence, and in the villages they have still. Where are we likely to find the best company, the most social ease, the pleasantest festivals, the gayest picnics? Where is the church the liveliest, the singing the loudest and the most festive, the hymns of the kind that sing themselves, and the minister nearest on a level with the people, and the people all on the same level? But that stage of prosperity by such means is, let us hope, at its highest water-mark, and certain to decline in our cities and larger towns—at least in the part of the country where we mostly live,—from this time forward. For as fast as social opportunities open and increase outside of church relations, they are felt to be more wholesome and genuine in their claims than when connected with churches; and then happily mere social influence grows of less attraction in the church. Our churches, and the same is true of all churches that represent the same general social level, are at least *less* sustained by mere social attractions than any others; and we should be unwise, considering our constituency, to depend very much upon them except in particular cases, and in our village and new communities. But there is a *permanent function* that religious institutions, and specially churches, do and must permanently *continue* to represent or fulfil, and that is the function of *public worship*. It is a function that supports the Roman

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Catholic Church to-day in spite of opinions in any literal sense incredible to even ordinary intelligence; and no church can compete for popular suffrage with the Roman Catholic, which lives by its *worship*, not its teaching.

The Episcopal Church, in America, far from distinguished hitherto by its learning, its zeal, its eloquence, or its popularity, is fast gaining upon the more profoundly theological and even more active sects, though in long prepossession of the ground, purely by its dignified, impressive, and full form of worship. Old Unitarian congregations must now begin to understand that they cannot hold their churches together merely by force of opinion, or even by good preaching. The teaching function of the pulpit for the class of people to whom we minister is very much divided with the teaching function of modern literature. Intelligent and reading people do not get their opinions, even on religion, exclusively or mainly from the pulpit. But what is *left* is the all-important *function of worship*, of *public prayer;* and that is to be sustained and the indestructible demand for it met under conditions and circumstances of the gravest difficulty; namely, of doubt and question respecting the very foundations on which for a hundred generations Christian worship has seemed to rest. Nothing short of a spirit of reverence, of spiritual faith and consecration surpassing any merely traditionary trust, because founded upon clear thinking, can avail to render such opinions as a scientific theology forces upon free minds, capable of a genuine and hearty union with the spirit of *public* prayer and *public* praise and common worship. To effect this union is the real problem of rational Christianity. People of our way of thinking in old communities are only to be brought to church, and kept faithful to religious institutions, through their new and carefully fed interest in the purely devotional and worshipful side of their nature. The Council, therefore, advises the National Conference that nothing is more wanting to the success of our cause than the cultivation and expression of the sentiment of reverence, prayer and worship, in forms consistent with our real convictions; that the devout element is the factor in our problem which requires additional stress and emphasis; that books of devotion and forms of prayer suited to our convictions are among our most urgent and pressing wants. If the time shall ever come when public worship among us attains to a dignity, richness, and symbolic beauty of its own, it will for the first time convince the world that our progress in opinion

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and our free criticism is not what many candid minds suppose it to be, a plan for making prayer needless and public worship impossible. This misapprehension has driven away already into secularism and a pure individualism, thousands of the logical and sincere; and is at the bottom of the neglect of thousands more who still have an attachment of custom to give their steadfast and hearty support to public worship. It is the honest opinion of many that intellectual freedom in matters of religion has given the death-blow to the implicit faith which they fancy can alone sustain churches. *They* believe that ignorance is the mother of devotion, and that genuine public worship is the privilege only of the unenlightened and superstitious. But there is already a reaction upon this extreme tendency; and it is, perhaps, the most encouraging and hopeful sign in our body. It almost looks as if our so-called radicals were going to be the first to put worship in our churches upon its own independent grounds, and to cultivate it as the best part of public religion. The first effort they made naturally was to emphasize freedom and the duty and value of absolute frankness and fidelity in forming and uttering those intellectual convictions. The next was to lay a new stress upon *morality*, as the only unquestionable good in religion; the last is to recognize the essential value of devoutness, or the worshipful sentiment, as the permanent and most precious factor in the training of the spiritual nature. A Puritan asceticism, a true form of self-consecration and of mystic devotion, begins to appear in some of the more advanced of our old radicals. Of course this is possible only with men of constitutional reverence. To prove that the livliest personal faith and the most tender reverence can exist with the least superstitious and the less traditional opinions, and that it can be made the crystallizing centre of instituted religion and public prayer, is the foreshadowing of that coming church which is only the true evolution and outcome of the church that has had lawful possession for eighteen centuries of the Christain world. Nothing can usefully be here said of the particular form of worship needed to give true expression to the church which we provisionally represent. Forms of worship, liturgies, prayer-books, cannot be wilfully contrived, invented, and forced upon liberal Christians. They will, they must, spring up naturally, spontaneously, and in a way to connect the present with the past,—the old experiences of the church with its new revelations. All sorts of experiments are going on, under our system of congregational independence,

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to cover the bareness, vary the monotony, and enrich the worship of our somewhat naked, inartistic, and unattractive order of services. The *solo* of the pulpit, broken only by the resting-space furnished by the singing of the choir, is slowly being relieved by some more or less successful attempts at responsive psalms; by the singing of church anthems, and the saying by people and minister together of the Lord's prayer. The success thus far is but partial and not very encouraging; but the effort to secure some actual participation by voice and knee and posture in the uttered prayers and praises, is plainly a significant omen. It is an effort in the right direction, and the only direction that can restore charm and interest to public worship in liberal hands. There must be confession with the lips, as well as in the heart, to make our dual nature one in its operation, or to make public worship a living reality. Prayer must be not only the act of the minister, silently adopted by the people, it must be their open act, and sealed with their own lips, before it will have the true effect to unite them as suppliants before God, or as disciples of a common Master. But this tendency cannot be forced, though it may be encouraged. By-and-by some devout and saintly man, moved by genuine sympathy and entering into the wants of the people, will devise out of the prayers and hymns of the church, and in a tender, historic spirit, some manual of public devotion, which on its own merit, tried and tested in some single congregation, will recommend itself for common and even general use among liberal Christians. We shall never know the power of any form of worship until it is used and honored by our churches in *general*. Our common hymn and tune book and its services of worship have done us a very uniting service. A book of common prayer would effect a still more important service. But it must be freely adopted by our individual churches from experience of its value, not made any *condition* of union; and it must probably originate, as everything does in our ranks, from the spontaneous impulse, or inspiration of some individual, and grow into use, instead of being wilfully devised by a committee, and adopted by resolution. And now to turn to the newer side of our constituency.

2. *Our Missionary Work in New Fields.*—It is always to be borne in mind that in a great country, yet sparsely settled, and very unequal in its moral and educational advantages, there are large parts to which none of the rules drawn from the immediate experience of the most advanced and cultured portion are wholly applicable. Be-

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cause monstrous views of the divine character and the plan of providence, once received in New England, have become harmless there, and ceased to terrify the many and to disgust the few, as they once did our fathers, we must not jump to the conclusion that great areas of population are not elsewhere still held in theological chains and in gross darkness. Those who have tried the interior even of our Middle States — not to speak of the Western, Southern and Pacific States — have found out how crude, how blinding, how enslaving, are the fears and hopes which still pass for the gospel with millions of our countrymen. What satisfaction can be greater, sweeter, or more animating than that which every active missionary of Unitarianism has experienced in being able to open the eyes and the hearts of these "prisoners," but not "of hope," and to receive their amazed and tearful gratitude on learning that good and able men, who revere Christianity and love the Bible, are able to explain the Scriptures rationally, and dissipate the delusions of a life-time respecting the law-bound and merciless justice of an angry and imprecative God, the intelligible claims of Jesus Christ, and the plain worth of essential goodness, as an accomplished salvation? We owe the proclamation of these glad tidings to those who neither receive the literature, nor what we call the public opinion of our Atlantic coast; to whom neither our best newspapers nor our best books ever come. They are in a state to be reached only by the living voice; and, if they are to be reached, they must be gone to or hunted after like lost sheep, for they are not folded, and have no shepherds to lead them to the pools of living water. There are probably myriads of honest and kindly people in this country, whose lives are clouded over, and their existence haunted by wholly unfounded and miserable fears; other myriads who are driven into sensuality or frivolity, by their despair of ever being saved on the principles which they yet suppose to be divinely accredited; other myriads who are cherishing vain and sentimental hopes of the peculiar favor of God, while they are morally withered and spiritually blind, — subjects of all sorts of useless and injurious excitements from the machinery of self-deluded and ignorant fanatics and revivalists.

It is either a local blindness to great and glaring facts, or it is a selfish apathy, or lack of a most ordinary humanity, that can render a body of Christians — with our pure, encouraging, and comforting view of the divine character and purposes — careless and indifferent

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to the claims of these sufferers. Allow that the prospects of establishing churches and extending our ecclesiastical dominion by these itinerants are small; is it nothing to go about the country and loose the prisoners to these blasphemous fears of a cruel God; nothing to send even one ray of light into the hearts of those heirs of darkness and superstition, who are often hopeless of all relief? If any men are to be envied, it is those who carry what to us have become stale, familiar, blunted news, our gospel of hope and light, to these eager, fresh, amazed, grateful souls, that have long sat in darkness, but then see a great light! This alone can renew the original joy of the apostles. It is the Holy Ghost, indeed, which they have not so much as heard of, that our missionaries carry and shed abroad in these benighted regions. We cannot doubt that there are yet abundant missionary fields even in Massachusetts,—places where the light of Unitarian Christianity has never yet effectually reached. And every minister, tired of seeing the satiated appetite with which his own flock receive the dry fodder of what was once fresh grass to them, has only to carry his hay to some of these neighboring towns, to find it turned into fragrant clover again.

But what a wonderful thing must our gospel of love and mercy, our rational, intelligible faith, be to a people isolated in the wilderness, or long overshadowed by the gloomy, hope-destroying, sepulchral creeds, which are propagated with the utmost zeal and activity over nine-tenths of our national area? The theological handcuffs and ecclesiastical stocks, banished from the more cultivated parts of the country, are all in use in other and less accessible regions. It is our duty, our blessed privilege, a privilege the whole denomination should rejoice in furnishing the means of extending, to send out our light, and truth, and emancipation to these conscripts and martyrs to an else hopeless and helpless bondage. You may think as lightly as you will, now, of the old Unitarian tracts and sermons that once made your hearts bound with joy, that broke *your* chains and made you free of the truth, when they are now scattered in your pews. You have got into a place of running waters, and you think meanly of those bottles that saved your life in the wilderness. But what they were to you fifty years ago, they still are to millions who first get any intelligible and satisfactory notions of God and Jesus, and life, and the future, from them,—in our great interior, and where orthodoxy still reigns in its primitive vigor and stern oppressive creeds. You do not

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owe relief to the fever-smitten towns and cities of the South more plainly than you owe you light and truth to these soul-fevered, heart-stifled sons and daughters that have never yet heard one syllable of the free grace and joy of a heavenly Father who never curses, who is ready to forgive on terms wholly generous, who proclaims himself not a God afar off but very nigh, and his beloved Son the shepherd and bishop of souls.

To test the remnant of missionary zeal in our body, to meet the wishes of many of our people scattered abroad, and to arouse the latent energy of the denomination, the Council recommend the appointment of three missionaries at large, to be assigned to such fields as may be agreed on after careful consideration. Whether it be the better policy to send these three missionaries into three different sections of the country — the West, the South, and the Pacific slope — and so scatter widely our seed, or to concentrate their labor upon some one State or section, for the purpose of testing within observed limits the efficacy of their work when aimed at a specific end, — such, for instance, as establishing our faith in the long impervious State of Connecticut, the reproach of our New England Unitarianism, — is a matter of detail, though it involves a question of policy, on which it is desirable to have the best judgment of this body.

The means of supporting these missionaries in chief, or missionary secretaries, must be derived from a much more general collection than is attainable under our present languid interest in missions. Suggestions have been made that a larger contribution might be secured, if the National Conference assumed the office of collecting and of disbursing a special amount, to be strictly devoted to purposes here formed and ordered. The Council is not of this opinion. It distinctly feels that the National Conference has in the American Unitarian Association the only agent and the only treasury and the only executor it needs, or can properly employ. The American Unitarian Association is the older, it is the trusted, it is the experienced factor in our organization. It has more of the confidence of the churches than any new agent or treasury could acquire in twenty years. And after a very patient examination and consideration of the schemes proposed for doubling or dividing our machinery for collecting and disbursing money, the Council deliberately declares its conviction that any measure pointing that way would end in disaster. We need, to complete the efficacy of our National Conference, noth-

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ing except to accept the American Unitarian Association with more complete faith for our agent. We were married to her for better and for worse, for weal and for woe, at the start. We need only to regard this union as an inseparable one, and to feel that if there be anything we do not like in the ways of our lawful spouse we must correct them, remonstrate with her, and protest if we will, but not coquette with any new partner, or seek any other mate. There needs to be, doubtless, a more constant consultation and methodical understanding between the Council you appoint to represent you, between your sessions and the board of the American Unitarian Association. But it is no fault of the American Unitarian Association that this consultation is not constant. No advice, no representations, ever made by your Council to the American Unitarian Association are ever repulsed; they are invited and welcomed. Let the Council attend better to its own business of advising and planning for the good of the cause and the spread of the denomination, and its advice and its wisdom will be received, as it always has been, with gratitude, and all the great weight it deserves. Few know that even the modest contributions we now get for our general purposes are very largely due to the zeal, the planning, and the effort of the Association and the personal labors of its secretary. The Council believes that without the activity and wisdom, founded on a large experience, of the American Unitarian Association, the applications for money for missionary purposes would rapidly decline. What is needed is an increased sense of the value of the Association, a more resolute and general effort to contribute to it.

It should be the policy of this body to encourage with all its might the habit of an annual contribution to the fund of the American Unitarian Association from every church in the denomination, even if it did not amount to five dollars. It will be a great day when all our churches, strong and weak, do something for the common fund. $40,000 contributed by three hundred and seventy-five churches would be a very different thing from $40,000 contributed by one hundred and fifty. Its moral force, its evidence of union and method among us, would double the value of the money. But we have legitimate wants for more money. The Council know the honest and urgent claims made on the Association, and they know the immense difficulties under which its operations are conducted,—the delay in the contributions; the unreasonableness of needy churches; the ignorance existing about

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the limited ability of the treasury; and the inexperience of many who criticise a policy they have not considered, and are not in a position to judge. No! the real want is only of more zeal in our whole body in raising the annual sum to meet the missionary enterprises, already existing,—a waiting for the means of going into operation.

The Council thinks no new machinery, no new treasury, no new Missionary Committee, is wanted,—only more concurrent effort among our churches in support of the agency we have. It is, of course, open to criticism, and the target of all complaints. It is its office to receive the fault-finding of the denomination. But the Council thinks all the criticisms it suffers are nine parts misapprehension, and the other part due to what is inherent in the case, and can only be mended by larger contribution in the churches. Moreover, there is no reason to complain of the spirit shown by our churches in these last distressing years towards our missionary fund. The money raised, if it be called $40,000, represents more allegiance, self-sacrifice, and real interest than the $100,000 raised in each of the two years of high tide, when everybody felt rich. Perhaps we could not properly have given more than we have this year past. Let us aim this present year to raise $50,000, and no more. Let the sum be carefully distributed by the Council in connection with the American Unitarian Association among the local Conferences, in proportion to their estimated capacity. Let a Finance Committee in each local Conference have charge of the collection in its own local field, and see that the churches, each and every one, is encouraged to do its fair part. We can *force* nothing, but we can *coax* a good deal, and we can create a public opinion in favor of a general and co-operative effort. There are excellent men and strong churches that do little or nothing, and they claim to have reasons for it. Their objections must be respected, if they are not shared or approved. But if there be anything unwise, impolitic, narrow, or small, or local and sectional, in the American Unitarian Association, trace it if you can to its source, and correct it, as you can, if you can clearly prove it, and show any way of bettering it. Change your secretary, your assistant, your board, in the proper time and way, if you please and can; but abandon forever any idea that any other agency can do the work, or is needed to do it, except the American Unitarian Association. The Chairman of the Council has been in most intimate relations and close fellowship with the American Unitarian Association from the

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start of the National Conference; and he declares that, whether under your honored and beloved Charles Lowe, or under your present secretary, there is no local spirit, and no narrowness, and no indocility, and no offishness in the American Unitarian Association towards the National Conference, or its national scope; and that under great and varied difficulties the Association has at least, in his judgment, been conducted with signal ability and success. He, at least, does not believe it could have a better secretary or assistant secretary than it now has.

VI. OF TERMS OF ADMISSION OF MINISTERS TO OUR CHURCHES AND FELLOWSHIP.

Another point of extreme interest, but also of great delicacy, is the consideration of the proper precautions and the formal methods, under or by which ministers not graduates of our theological schools, nor hitherto of our communion, may be accredited to our churches as fit candidates for the pulpit and pastorate. No method, acceptable only to ministers, can be of any practical use. If we are to have a method, it must be one that recommends itself to our laity and churches, and which the public opinion of the denomination heartily endorses, or rather inaugurates. In this assembly our laity are in the proportion of two to one to our ministers; and here, where we are truly a body neither of laymen nor clergymen, but of churches, is the true place to consider and debate the subject. Jealousies of intellectual liberty, fears that any rules adopted here might be used to restrain or to prejudice theological freedom of thinking and utterance, have hitherto blighted all propositions to make admission to our pulpits and our ministry subject to any new conditions and restraints. Everybody knows that now any man who can succeed in pleasing the ear of a congregation for a few Sundays can readily get himself ordained or installed as the minister of the congregation; or, if not, can go on with his ministry without any formality of that kind, by the consent of the pewholders or the absence of any open resistance. Of course, in these cases, the competency and moral character of the candidate are presumed to be what they should be; but it is equally true that the presumption is sometimes, perhaps not seldom, a mistaken one, and that men of no stableness, of little special education for the ministry, and of doubtful and sometimes, alas! of *not* doubt-

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ful personal character, are allowed to bring reproach upon our ministry and upon liberal Christianity, as well as to begin the scattering, division, and ruin of particular churches. The evils of the old system of standards of doctrine, and an harassing inquest upon theological opinions, and a purely *clerical* police over ministerial qualifications, no doubt were great and invidious, and have brought about a reaction in which merely theological or merely ministerial standards have been not unwisely set aside. The churches know that they want in their pulpits men of prompt, bright, and popular gifts,—men of pleasing address, good voice, and engaging manners. They know, too, that some men without regular theological training and without conventional ministerial standing are really better and more successful ministers than many others who have both. They do not know as well, that while this justifies some departure from the old rules of strictly guarding the door by which candidates enter the ministry, it does not protect the profession from the approach of men whose whole qualification is smartness and address, with some faculty of public utterance,—men who, having tried other callings and failed in them, make an experiment of ours; men who have lost their religious character in other denominations, and thinking us of easier virtue, wish to impose themselves upon our weaker discipline. They do not know that men of no convictions, equally ready to be orthodox or heterodox, often attempt to buy our sympathy by professing a conversion to our opinions, after having run themselves out in their pretended connection with other forms of faith.

Clearly, sober laymen and serious ministers must be agreed that no man not of serious and sober character, nay, of unspotted reputation, can properly have any place in the ministry, least of all in ours, whose very foundation is that of practical righteousness. And as clearly there must be, besides unquestioned purity of purpose and life, some satisfactory evidences of ability to teach, some such proofs of theological training and acquaintance with Christianity, as entitles a man to call himself a member of the clerical profession. There are quacks in medicine and pretenders in law, but the professions of medicine and law are always engaged in exposing them, and warning the public against their impositions,—not without general success, but, alas! not without lamentable failures. Can the Christian ministry continue to call itself a public and learned profession, and have no

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port of entry, no quarantine, no custom-house, no stamp of any kind carrying with it a guarantee of the claims to free circulation in a given character and office of the man who bears it? It is not erroneous opinions against which we are seeking to protect ourselves, but pretenders, impostors, and ignorant and self-seeking men, who are not even taught in the general elements common to the ministerial profession in all denominations, and who are of doubtful, or perhaps of bad, moral character.

What, then, is wanted, is a trusted committee, appointed by this body, and made responsible for the examination of all candidates for our ministry not coming through our theological schools, as to general fitness for usefulness and moral and religious character, whose certificate the churches may require before admitting them to ministerial rank and privileges; which shall be held indispensable to the public ordination or installation of any minister not possessing the certificate of one of the deans of our theological schools. The Council will not further formulate this proposal, certainly not before the subject is cleared by discussion; but it suggests that the Committee on Fellowship, carefully chosen with reference to this duty, shall in future have this function for its chief business. It would recommend that quarterly sessions of this committee be held, to receive candidates and examine their record and their pretension to ministerial functions in our body. The Council believe that such a plan would promote the accession of genuine men from other bodies to ours, and save us from the irruption of dangerous and self-seeking recruits. No mistake is more common than to think some formal method of accomplishing important objects to be a restriction on the freedom with which those objects are sought. A house with a door, a bell, and a porter, is much more likely to be visited than one on which notice is given that anybody is welcome who chooses to steal in at any one of the windows, or to come down the chimney. Ignorance how to effect a proper and dignified union with our body prevents many valuable men inclined to our fellowship from coming near us; while the facility of stepping in without warrant or notice serves to add to us some who would never venture to subject themselves to any competent examination. It need only be added that experience in the method of investigating claims would make it very important to choose such a committee with extreme care, and possibly it should have lay as well as clerical mem-

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bers; but it should be a committee chosen with reference to continuance in office, like judges in our higher courts, for as long a term as other considerations of prudence would warrant.

VII. SECTARIAN SCHOOLS.

One more suggestion the Council feel warranted in offering. It is well known that the schools for girls in our country, especially those of an endowed and academic character, are chiefly under the control, and conducted in the interest of religious opinions, from which it has been our endeavor to escape, and to save our children from mistaking for the simplicity of the Christian faith. Such, however, is the cheapness of education in these great denominational schools, and such, often, their excellent character in all respects except that of rational religious opinions, that Unitarian parents are either induced by neighborhood, or by considerations of expense, to send their girls to them, at the risk, and too often with the result, of making them, at a tender age, when the judgment is weak and the sensibilities soft and warm, and easily moulded, converts to opinions that prejudice their whole religious feelings and after life; leaving them, in numerous cases, to be Roman Catholics, or Calvinists, or Trinitarians, for the residue of their mortal existence. The lack of wisdom or prudence exhibited by Unitarian parents in this direction is a sad evidence how little they estimate the normal difference to be in its total outcome of a life lived upon rational Christian principles and opinions, and one governed and shaped by any form of so-called orthodoxy. The amount of dissension, alienation, and anxiety caused by the failure to keep a household in religious sympathy one with another, is known only to those who have experienced its sorrows. Parents are bound to bring their children up in that faith which they think and believe to be the nearest to the truth, and the most favorable to happiness and usefulness; and the folly of thinking that they are not to strive to commit their children while subject to their proper authority to what they themselves believe true and wholesome in religious opinions and practices, on the ground of leaving them free to follow later their own independent judgment and taste, is one that could be defended only by those who think that children have no claims on their parents' experience, and that their experience in religious truth is specially to be kept quiescent. But those who, in addition to the neglect of with-

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holding their own convictions and opinions from their children, actually expose them to the active influence of opposite opinions, Roman Catholic or Protestant, show that while they are jealous about exerting their own proper influence over their children's religious opinions, they are willing to subject them to the direct and systematic influence of those who not only have no scruples against changing their views, and fixing them in a creed opposed to that professed by their parents, but actually regard it as a high religious duty to convert them to what they imagine to be the only saving faith. No unfaithfulness could be more serious in its consequences, or is less defensible on moral or religious grounds, or even on grounds of common sense and prudence. To obviate this danger, which is found very serious in the neighborhood of cheap and richly endowed schools, such as exist in all parts of New England, a school was started at Greenfield, Mass., under the auspices of our Unitarian society there, and particularly by the energy and faith of our well-known and experienced fellow-member, Rev. Mr. Moore, whose teachers are all of the Unitarian faith, and whose whole influence is avowedly Unitarian. The heads of families in Greenfield have testified the valuation they put upon their faith, by giving freely of their substance to establish a school of high character, which should protect their daughters from the proselyting influence of the endowed schools, to which they must otherwise resort. It is quite impossible, however, to overcome the difference between the necessary expenses of board and tuition in this school and in that of largely endowed Trinitarian schools in the Valley of the Connecticut, without some moderate denominational support, given in money, on general grounds of duty to the cause. The trustees of the Greenfield Academy have laid their plea before the Unitarian public, and the President of the Board is here to urge it upon this National Conference. The Council, without becoming in advance partisans of this special enterprise, — which, nevertheless, seems to them to have honest and urgent claims on your consideration, because its friends ask help only after doing their own best to show zeal and faith in the value of the undertaking — has considered it a duty to bring forward the general grounds on which schools of this character deserve your attention and support, as a high denominational policy.

It is the duty of the Council to add, that the cheapness and excellency of the education offered to girls in Antioch College is, on the general grounds here presented, worthy of the attention of Unitarian

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parents, West and East. It is not too much to say that girls can there receive, in the midst of the best moral and religious influences, an education equal to that which boys may obtain at Exeter or Phillips Academy, Andover. It is the settled purpose of the Trustees of Antioch College to make it the best school in the country, as well as among the cheapest, for the co-education of girls and boys, as well as of young men and women aspiring to collegiate honors. It has the advantage of twenty years' experience, a large fund, the income of which has been temporarily crippled by decline of stocks and real estate, but which is still adequate, with small and temporary aid from its old friends, to maintain an admirable corps of teachers, housed in buildings of unsurpassed convenience, and situated in a region of wonderful cheapness and great salubrity—accessible from this spot in twenty-four hours. Those who know Antioch College best are those most certain of the thoroughness, the pure moral atmosphere, the high value of its influence as a school, and as a tried and proved success in the higher education of young women, in connection with that of young men. The recent appointment of Rev. Nicholas P. Gilman as preacher and teacher, and probable professor in Antioch, is an additional guarantee of the future prosperity of the college.

VIII. GENERAL MATTERS.

The Council congratulates the National Conference upon the appointment to the Lectureship of Ecclesiastical History in Harvard College, on the Wynn foundation, of Rev. J. H. Allen, the learned and accomplished brother, whose long published works and his more recent papers in our *Review* and in the *Christian Register*, as well as his address before the Ministers' Institute, are evidence enough of his ability and his desire to render ecclesiastical history a study freshly attractive and practically useful to modern wants. The Council desires to express its sense of the loss the denomination has suffered since it last met in the death of Rev. Mr. Mumford, the able, devoted, and acceptable editor of the *Chrtstian Register*, which he revived, and made an organ respected not in our denomination alone, but by the religious and even the secular press of the country. The Council rejoices that so able a successor has already commended himself to the readers of the *Register* and to the denomination, in the new editor, Rev. C. G. Ames, and trusts that new energy will draw a still larger

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constituency about the venerable organ of our churches and our cause. The Council regrets to announce the death by atrophy of the *Inquirer*, published for thirty years or more, as a denominational organ in New York, under the name of the *Christian Inquirer*, the *Liberal Christian*, and the *Inquirer*. Probably $50,000 would hardly cover the money contributions made by our New York and Brooklyn Unitarians to the support of this weekly; and if the unpaid services of its volunteer editors and contributors were thrown in at a low valuation, the sum might be swelled to $100,000. When the owner and publisher became ashamed of asking any more assistance from the generous personal friends who had so often come to his support, and had begun to feel the bottom of his own private pocket, the *Inquirer* was allowed to die, — not, however, with a dollar of debt to dishonor its memory, or a moral obligation of any sort unfulfilled. If the remonstrances and regrets of a widely-scattered but thin constituency in the West and East are any proof of its having lived an honest and useful life, and done faithful service for thirty years, the letters that were gratefully received and filed away when its demise was announced a year ago, would furnish forth a respectable and honest obituary. It is hoped that the papers newly started in the West, under Rev. Mr. Gannett and others, and in Montreal, may more than make good this decease of a long known denominational organ.

The Council congratulates the Conference upon the ability, temper and conduct of the *Unitarian Review*. True it is more honored and praised than subscribed for, which we cannot but heartily regret. The Council judges that the subsidizing of the only *Review* we have, by a handsome yearly sum, enabling the editors to offer adequate payment, would help to raise the standard of scholarship among ourselves, besides supplying the public with a fresh and trustworthy, an ever-living and powerful witness of the intellectual, theological, and moral condition of the denomination. The Council thinks that any rich man, anxious to produce a lasting and momentous influence upon the denomination, could not possibly effect his purpose more surely than by leaving a fund not less than $50,000 to the Unitarian Association, the income to be devoted to the payment of contributors to the *Unitarian Review* for the preparation of elaborate articles on theological and other appropriate themes, not obtainable without a recompense worthy of the scholarship and ability needed to make that *Review* a true leader in the intellectual and spiritual life of the country.

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The Council congratulates the Conference on the addition made to the faculty of the Theological School in Meadville, on the appointment of Rev. Mr. Christy to one of its vacant chairs, and on the promotion of Prof. C. C. Everett to the Deanship of the Faculty of our Cambridge Divinity School. It desires to suggest to the Conference some appropriate expression of gratitude for the long and valuable services of the honored Dean, just retired, Rev. Dr. Stearns, whose profoundly religious spirit has penetrated his theological teachings with a temper that can never be forgotten by his numerous pupils in both the schools where he so long labored, and was loved and revered.

The withdrawal by prolonged ill-health of Rev. Charles H. Brigham from his post at Ann Arbor, reminds the Council and will remind the Conference of his learned and indefatigable labors as a teacher and lecturer in the shadow of Michigan University and at Meadville, besides his long and successful pastorate at Taunton. The Council would not have this honored laborer in our cause feel in his decline that the appreciative affection and gratitude of the denomination does not follow him to his enforced retirement from labors he loved, and still loves, and whose fruits will never perish.

Rev. J. H. Allen has filled Mr. Brigham's post very successfully during the past year at Ann Arbor. Rev. H. C. Badger has taken up Dr. Rufus Stebbins's work at Ithaca, with fair hopes of continuing his acceptable and arduous labors in that critically interesting place. It is much to be lamented that a work similar to theirs is not inaugurated at New Haven, and perhaps at Princeton, N. J., and Iowa University.

The Council does not dare to enter upon the necrology of the last two years. It would furnish names among our clergy and laity like those of Putnam and Bryant, which could not be touched without requiring more skill and time than the Council has at command. We can only ask the Conference to bear in mind all the benefactors of our cause and the ornaments of our faith who have recently departed, and to enliven and solace their own faith and hope, and to quicken their zeal, by thinking of the cloud of witnesses who look down upon the work they have left incompleted in our hands, with longings to send us the new reasons they now behold for carrying on the cause,—

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theirs and ours,—the cause of truth, liberty and love,—sacred in heaven and on earth,—with renewed ardor and more resolute self-sacrifice. All of which is respectfully submitted in behalf of the Council, by its Chairman.

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THE NEW THEOLOGY.*

BY REV. JAMES FREEMAN CLARKE, D. D.

I have been requested to read a paper to-day on the new theology. In one sense there is not, and cannot be, any new theology. The best theology comes from the inflowing of new life, which renews and transfigures the old forms. Every day God makes all things new, — in nature, man, history, science, art, religion. But this new life springs from the old roots, works by the old methods, carries onward the old movements; it is one and the same, yesterday, to-day, and forever.

One of the most profound theological statements concerning Christianity is contained in the Proem to the Fourth Gospel. In the spurious heading of the Apocalypse, its writer is called "John, the theologian." Theologian, in the original sense, means one who is himself a word of God, or one by whom God utters himself; and thus Orpheus, Musæus, and other prophets, were called theologians or divine words. In this, the highest and noblest sense of the term, theology is older than religion, for it is the revelation or word of God to man, without which religion would be impossible. An article in the London *Spectator* (Nov. 16, 1867), ascribed to Mr. Martineau, gives us the same definition. Theology, according to him, is not abstract or inferential speculation, but the substance of all direct communications of God himself. Theology (*θεου Λογος*) in the lower sense is only a word *about* God; but in the better sense it is a word *from* God; therefore higher than religion, as the fountain is higher than the stream. This word from God, this divine utterance, says the proem was "in the beginning," "was with God" always, and "was God himself;" God uttering himself from the first to his creatures, never leaving himself without a witness, "lighting every man who comes into the world." Christianity, therefore, the "word made flesh" in Jesus, is no new revelation, but that which was from the beginning, which was before Abraham; a portion of the same divine revelation

* A paper read at the National Conference of Unitarian and other Christian Churches Saratoga, Wednesday, Sept. 18, 1878, by James Freeman Clarke.

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which is seen in the created universe, without which was not anything made that was made, — the revelation of God which pours light and life evermore into the world. Christianity, according to this majestic utterance, is no interruption of Nature, no afterthought, no remedy sent to repair an error, but another step in the unfolding history of God's works and ways. For God's creative movements are not by interrupted spasms, but continuous advances, — "*non per saltum, sed per gradum*;" that is, as we say, *gradual*. Herein the deepest religious intuition allies itself with the largest intuition of science. Why does science insist on unbroken, universal, permanent law? Why does it refuse to admit a break in its continuity? Not because of any empirical observation or sensible experience, for it finds everywhere catastrophes, crises, miracles, in the history of earth and man. This faith in universal law, which is the ultimate axiom, making science possible, is an intuition, behind all actual and possible observation. It antedates experience, and confesses as the fundamental faith of science that law is universal and unchanging; that it reigns supreme throughout the universe; that it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be world without end. And it declares that all cataclysms, catastrophes, miracles, crises, are parts of universal law, and one day to be recognized as such.

What science affirms of law, theology affirms of God. What are these scientific postulates, of primordial atoms — a super-essential ether, intense molecular activities, laws reaching to the roots of all being, and passing beyond the flaming bounds of space and time, — what but the Infinite Being himself, who holds all things in the hollow of his hand? The difference is a grammatical one, — a change of gender; where theology says He, science says It. Each must follow its own nomenclature, and speak its own language. Science, which studies outward forms and external movement, prefers the neuter gender, that it may retain its hold on things; for things are its object. But theology, which goes to the source and centre of the world, must speak of this supreme essence as a person, since only in our own personal identity do we find the conception of a living central unity. The soul of man is the only unit we know, indivisible, permanent amid all change. All that we know else can be divided into parts, — inside and outside, upper and lower. But who can speak of the upper or under side of his soul? When we say I, myself, we, we speak of the only essence we know which is unchanging amid all

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change; permanent amid the perpetual flux of atoms; which goes forth equally into thought, love, action, into imagination, memory, hope; which descends into pain, and rises into joy, and is entire in all, total, undivided, always itself. If, therefore, we are to conceive of a real unity at the centre of the universe, flowing out equally into all of creation, we are compelled to conceive of it as a person. Studying the effects and the method, we may say "It;" rising to the source and substance, we must say "He."

But are we then obliged, by any intellectual law, to accept this unity of being and of working force? May we not be satisfied with the wonderful play of phenomena, the variety of forms, the ever-changing appearance of things? This is claimed by the Agnostics, and sometimes asserted in the name of science. "We only know phenomena," they say, "separate phenomena, which are facts; grouped phenomena, which are laws."

If this were true, theology, of course, would be speedily at an end; but with theology, science would also cease. For if we must regard creation as a drifting storm of confused phenomena, coming from nowhere and going nowhere, the deepest life of science would disappear. Science, which strives for universal order, cannot accept this chaos instead of a cosmos. It evermore seeks the merging of laws into larger ones; the going below the transient to find the permanent. It seeks the cause behind the cause; one mystery explained, it attemps the explanation of the larger mystery beyond. The end of all its efforts is to make the universe more simple; in other words, to reach the unity which combines all variety. This is the aim which inspires its efforts, consciously or unconsciously. This led Newton to the Law of Gravitation, Laplace to the Nebular Hypothesis, Darwin to the Survival of the Fittest. Science consists in the study of facts in order to harmonize them under laws, and the study of laws in order to unify them under broader laws. But this unity, the object of scientific struggle, is, as we have seen, only conceivable as a living unity, of which the personal unit in ourselves is the inevitable type.

This central unity unfolds itself evermore into variety. Theology, in the sense of doctrinal statement, therefore, must recognize the law of development and progress; or, to use the latest term, evolution. The term is new, but the idea is old. We have seen it intimated in the Proem to John's Gospel. It is more clearly stated in the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus gave a formula corresponding to that of evolu-

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tion, when he said, "I am not come to destroy the law or the prophets. I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil." Evolution is fulfilment. It is carrying up the old life into a higher form. Evolution has been taught by philosophers as the law of continuity in history, and affirmed by Swedenborg in his largest generalization as the law of degrees. It is essentially Christ's method of progress. Jesus, who had no conservatism as regards the forms of religion; and would not put his new wine into the old bottles of ceremony; who omitted ablutions, Sabbaths, distinction of meats; nevertheless did not intend to allow one jot of substance, one tittle of reality to pass away, till it was fulfilled in something higher.

This, therefore, is the method of all real advance in theology. It does not drop the past, but fulfils it. The religion of Abraham and the Patriarchs was fulfilled in that of Moses. The religion of Moses was fulfilled in that of Jesus. The actual religion of Jesus will be fulfilled in a higher development of Christianity, not in any abstract religion of humanity. Christianity has developed from its Jewish form to the universal religion taught by Paul—from its mediæval form to that of Protestant orthodoxy; it is now undergoing a new transformation. But this transformation will not take it out of the line of development. It will be another step of growth, not a revolution.

And here I will venture to support my statement with what the evolutionists must regard as the highest authority in this matter,—that of Mr. Herbert Spencer himself. In his work on *The Study of Sociology*, he speaks of the "theological bias" and the "anti-theological bias" as being both opposed to this study. Under the latter head he remarks as follows:—

These errors, however, which the anti-theological bias produces, are superficial compared with the error that remains. The antagonism to superstitious beliefs habitually leads to entire rejection of them. They are thrown aside with the assumption that along with so much that is wrong there is nothing right. Whereas the truth, recognizable only after antagonism has spent itself, is that the wrong beliefs rejected are superficial, and that a right belief, hidden by them, remains when they have been rejected. * * * The dogmas are only the temporary forms of that which is permanent.

The process of evolution which has gradually modified and advanced men's conceptions of the universe will continue to modify and advance them during the future. The ideas of cause and origin,

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which have been slowly changing, will change still further. But no changes in them, even when pushed to the extreme, will expel them from consciousness; and hence there can never be any extinction of the correlative sentiments. No more in this than in other things will evolution alter its general direction; it will continue along the same lines as hitherto.

Without seeming to, the development of religious sentiment has been continuous from the beginning: and its nature, when a germ, was the same as is its nature when fully developed. * * *

No one need expect, then, that the religious consciousness will die away, or will change its lines of evolution. Its specialties of form will fade, * * * but the substance of the consciousness will persist. That the object-matter can be replaced by another object-matter, as supposed by those who think the "religion of humanity" will be the religion of the future, is a belief countenanced neither by induction nor by deduction. However dominant may become the moral sentiment enlisted on behalf of humanity, it can never exclude the sentiment alone properly called religious, awakened by that which is behind humanity, and behind all other things. * * * No such thing as "a religion of humanity" can ever do more than temporarily shut out the thought of a power of which humanity is but a small and fugitive product,—a power which was in course of ever-changing manifestations before humanity was, and will continue through other manifestations when humanity has ceased to be.

Thus speaks Herbert Spencer, who adds that the bias against theology is a hindrance to social study, because, "ignoring the truth for which religions stand, it undervalues religious institutions in the past, thinks they are needless in the present, and expects them to leave no representatives in the future."

Following this statement of Herbert Spencer, we may conclude that the fundamental ideas of theology in the past will be found, in a higher form, in the theology of the future. The ideas of unity and variety, substance and form, cause and effect, the infinite and the finite, final cause, right and wrong, and the Divine Personality, will not be left behind, but carried up and transfigured forever into something nobler. Fundamentally these notions are ever the same. As soon as man begins to think, he thinks according to these ideas. When the child asks "Who did that?" it has in its mind the same majestic idea of cause which inspired the researches of Galileo and Lord Bacon. When the child sobs out, "It is not right to do that, and I can't do it," the same solemn chord of duty is touched which sounds in our hearts when the martyr goes to die, and by which the

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eternal heavens are strong. Every night that you or I look up at the stars and meditate their awful distances, the same sense of infinity is aroused which Paul felt when he declared that "from Him and through Him and to Him are all things." These ideas are the eternal axes on which the thought of the child and the archangel equally revolve. As the vast power of gravitation holds every material atom, so that it can never escape the central attraction of the universe, so these ideas fasten every intelligent creature to the infinite mind. The all-pervading power of God reaches through nature by physical laws, holding all things in a perfect order. And the same mighty presence reaches through the vast hierarchy of spiritual being by moral laws, maintaining the moral order of the universe. The comet breaks wildly from its path and rushes into depths of darkness, and into the silence of lonely space. But the great archangel of God, whom men call gravitation, reaches after it, and gathers up every minute particle of its thin mist, and leads it back, after a wandering of ten thousand years, to its central sun. So the powers of moral evil, of spiritual wickedness, may break away, and plunge for long ages into black gulfs of sin; but the archangel of divine love will forever follow them, until the last sinner repents and the last soul is saved.

These principles also show that, according to the law of evolution, many objections to anthropomorphism in theology must be relinquished. To think the Infinite Being altogether such an one as ourselves creates a theology which will pass away. But there will always remain a substance of human consciousness in our conception of Deity. A God above ourselves, but like ourselves, is the only object of worship. What the greatest of modern theologians, Swedenborg, has so strongly insisted on—that "God is in the form of man,"—cannot be wholly false. All the religions of the world have thus far gone up along this line of evolution. The four hundred millions who worship Buddah worship a deified man. The ancient gods of India had the attributes and forms of men and women. The gods of Egypt were men and women. The gods of Greece and Rome, of Scandinavia, of all Polytheisms, were intensely human. Equally so is the Supreme Being in the three great monotheisms. Judaism, Mohammedanism, and Christianity worship a Deity of human attributes.

And why not? Is not the soul of man the highest fact in our

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knowledge? If the essence of religion, as Herbert Spencer supposes, is to be found in awe before insoluble mystery, then what more true than Wordsworth's experience when he says,—

> Not chaos, not
> The darkest pit of lowest Erebus,
> Nor aught of blinder vacancy, scooped out
> By help of dreams, can breed such fear and awe
> As fall upon us often when we look
> Into our minds, — into the mind of man.

Treating of this theme, the soul of man, he says: —

> I must tread on shadowy ground, must sink
> Deep; and, aloft ascending, breathe in worlds
> To which the heaven of heavens is but a veil.

Or is the essence of worship the adoration of power? Then what power do we know, to be compared with that mental power in the human soul which can grasp the universe, fathom its secrets, unfold its mysteries, and whose creations are almost as real and imperishable as those of Nature itself? What power that we see at work in Nature, is so amazing as the human mind; which, in its little house of clay, can weigh the planets, analyze the chemistry of the stars, and calculate a million of years beforehand the minute when the shadow of the moon shall darken the day on any spot of earth? What are the blind forces of Nature compared with this luminous intelligence? and which is the best type of Deity?

> One leap of ocean scatters on the sand
> The quarried bulwarks of the loosening land.
> One thrill of earth dissolves a century's toil,
> Strewed like the leaves that vanish in the soil.
> One hill o'erflows, and cities sink below,
> Their marbles splintering in the lava's glow.
> But one sweet tone, scarce whispered to the air,
> From shore to shore the blasts of ages bear.
> One humble name, which oft perchance has borne
> The tyrant's mockery and the courtier's scorn,
> Towers o'er the dust of earth's forgotten graves,
> As once, emerging from the waste of waves,
> The rocky Titan, round whose shattered spear
> Coiled the last whirlpool of the drowning sphere.

When, therefore, we are told that we must not attribute design to the Deity, because it is making him like man, we may properly reply that this is a reason for doing it. Design, or the adopting of means

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to ends, is the universal attribute of humanity. The thousand millions of men on the earth arise every morning to begin their work of adapting means to ends, and continue to exercise this power till the evening. Is not this the type of some higher teleology, which is practised by archangels, assisting in the perpetual creation of order in the universe? Design runs up, *here*, along a line of evolution, from the rude building of a hut or carving a club by a savage, to the design of a Parthenon or an Apollo, of the Dresden Madonna, or the tragedy of Hamlet. Why should the development of this faculty end here? Why may not the worlds of the universe, with all their contents, under the presiding mind, be the continued work of a hierarchy of intelligences, reaching up to the throne of God? The new theology will not disdain to consider this question, and modify, in this sense, its doctrine of the Divine Creator.

There is, then, a theology of substance and a theology of form,—the first unchanging, though it may become deeper and more vital with all new experience; the second advancing with advancing thought, widening with enlarging knowledge. The theology of substance is knowledge,—it is knowing God; or, according to the profound saying of Paul, it is being *known of him*. The finite cannot, by searching, discover the infinite; the infinite must seek and find the finite. When God comes to us by his revelations—in nature, history, humanity, life,—then we know him because we are known of him. And when we have once known him, and so far as we have known him, we know him always. Herein is the perseverance of saints; that no real experience of the soul can pass away; that what God gives he gives forever. Therefore theology, as to its substance, which is knowledge of the infinite in the finite, may be increased, but cannot be lost. It is that divine spirit in the soul which, once seen, always remains, either as comforter or reprover, as judge or helper.

We wholly reject and set aside, therefore, as regards this theology of substance, the Agnostic theory, which denies to it objective reality. All belief is relative, no doubt; but knowledge, if there is such a thing, is absolute. It is not fugitive emotion, nor vague sentiment. The human race holds as firmly to the infinite as to the finite, to the unseen as to the seen. I am as sure of my own personal existence, of the unseen ego, as I am of the outward world. Out of the depths of his being man cries evermore to God. Placed on the isthmus of this middle state, the soul, dissatisfied with all things seen and tempo-

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ral, rises forever to commune with the eternal. The most deeply rooted of all human faculties is this divine aspiration, found in all lands, all times, all races. The one universal element in man is his religious nature, his knowledge that there is something divine in the universe.

Passing on to the theology of form, we find that it has risen through all past fetichisms and idolatries, polytheisms, and crude monotheisms, to the Christian monotheism into which we ourselves were born. This also has continued its development through many stages. It has had a ritual theology, teaching salvation by sacraments; an ecclesiastical theology, teaching salvation by the priesthood; a dogmatic theology, teaching salvation by creeds; a pietistic theology, teaching salvation by religious emotion; a theology of decency and propriety, teaching salvation by conformity to social customs. All these theologies have hardened into routine, and been frozen into creeds; then, from time to time, souls of fire have arisen, to pour into them new life, like Augustine, Savonarola, Luther, Wesley. During many centuries the theology founded by Augustine and perfected by Calvin has given the formulas to Christian faith. It could not have done this unless it had been animated by some vital truths. I have elsewhere endeavored to show what those truths of orthodoxy are. But now this ancient system is everywhere falling into ruins. In countries where its rule was absolute, as Holland, Scotland, Geneva, and New England, it has fallen into dilapidation and decay. An orthodox Boston clergyman told me, some years ago, that he did not believe there was a Calvinist left in New England, and he was thankful for it, for he regarded Calvinism as the sin against the Holy Ghost. In one of the late numbers of the *Independent* there was an article describing the new orthodoxy of the United States, from which I will quote a few sentences, in order to show how entirely at one with us a large school of modern orthodoxy has become.

"The new orthodoxy," this writer states, "emphasizes the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man; does not speak so much of God as a king, but more as a father; not as inflexible justice, but as omnipotent love. Its ideas of human brotherhood are modifying the arrogance and exclusiveness of the old orthodoxy. The new orthodoxy, in speaking of sin, lays stress on personal accountability, and seeks to inspire hope, and arouse to action. It regards sin not as a fatal inheritance, but an evil act. Guilt is personal, and cannot be

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transferred. Children are born under God's blessing, and not under his curse. They belong to a redeemed race. Salvation is release from the dominion of sin, and is possible for all. Modern orthodoxy," he adds, "is therefore a gospel of hope, and not, like the old orthodoxy, a gospel of despair. The new orthodoxy, in speaking of the atonement, gives more emphasis to its power to change man than to propitiate God. It is a manifestation of love, not of wrath, proving God's willingness to forgive. The new orthodoxy regards future punishment not as the infliction of a vengeful Deity, but as the inevitable result of evil conduct. Man's choice of self-indulgence, *if persevered in*, is eternal death; and, *while he transgresses the laws of his being*, cannot be otherwise. Sin, rather than penalty, is the dreadful thing. To the new orthodoxy the doors of heaven stand wide open. God, and not Satan, is omnipotent. God lays claim to all his creatures, for all belong to him." Thus we see that the heresies of our Unitarian fathers have become the new orthodoxy of to-day.

A well-informed writer in the current number of the *Unitarian Review* describes the orthodoxy of Scotland as in an equally dilapidated condition. The three Presbyterian churches of Scotland, all holding to the Westminster Assembly's Confession, are apparently saturated with heresy. Dr. Story's atonement is, that God does not forgive men for what Christ has done, or from his love for Christ, but from his love for the sinner himself. Revelation, he asserts, is all that divine knowledge which God imparts to man *by any means*. Calvinism is openly denied and rejected in all the three churches of Scotland. It was publicly declared in the Synods of these churches, that the members and ministers do not believe the creeds they sign. The doctrine of the Trinity is criticised and rejected; the doctrine of everlasting punishment denounced.

In the Church of England, as we all know, similar heresies are constantly increasing. The doctrine of the plenary inspiration of the Bible has long since been ignored by all the leading critics of that Church. It was openly asserted in one of its great ecclesiastic Synods, that no bishop or priest in the Church of England believes the Athanasian Creed; which is, nevertheless, solemnly read in all the churches at least four times a year. The old orthodoxy, once so rigid, is fast disappearing in all the Protestant churches of England, Scotland, Holland, Germany, and the United States.

What is to take its place? The answer, according to what we

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have said, is plain. It will not be the work of any thinker, or class of thinkers. Theology is not made, it grows. As the religious life advances, the creed conforms itself to that life. Prophets and thinkers may help forward this progress, if they work in the line of growth; not otherwise. The new theology will therefore be a Christian theology, for the best religious life of the world is still advancing along the line of Christian development. The power of Christianity as a life in the soul, in communities, in nations, is by no means exhausted. Those who identify Christianity with any of its past creeds, and see how they are in a process of decay, naturally prophesy its speedy dissolution. But Christianity has outgrown one creed after another, developing new forms of faith and action. Out of the narrow Judaism of the twelve apostles, it grew up into the broad Church, including all races, of Paul. It developed the strong Church of the Middle Ages, capable of protecting civilization in a period of warfare. When that civilization was disintegrated by overflowing barbaric tribes, it developed the Papal power to give unity to Christendom. When that unity became a despotism, it unfolded Protestantism, to break the iron fetters of a too powerful hierarchy. When Protestantism ran to dogmatism, and a more various life was needed, Christianity once more unfolded into a multitude of sects,—Quaker, Baptist, Puritan, Methodist, Swedenborgian, Unitarian, Universalist. Always, as the life unfolds, the new creed adapts itself to it. We ascribe too much importance to thought, in supposing that it creates life. *Life* is the *Light* of man, not the reverse. The creed of the future, like all the creeds of the past, will be the expression of the new life. And as Christianity is still a growing and active power of spiritual and moral life, the new theology must necessarily be Christian.

Nor is the historic Christ outgrown. He will still be the centre of the new theology, as he is the central figure in human history. In Him men will see God manifest in the flesh, recognize the identity of spirit and matter, eternity and time, the divine and human. In looking at him, men will continue to see the God who was afar off becoming nigh,—and he who sees him will always see the Father. One human life like that of Jesus lifts the world forever to a higher plane. Jesus has brought God to man, and lifted man to God. Since he has *done* this, all minute criticisms intended to discredit the integrity of his character become futile. We know what he was, by

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what he has done; we know what he is, by what he is doing. As long as men continue to come to God through him, so long must Jesus be the centre of the religious thought of the world.

The new theology must also be one of *optimism*. Down to this time it has been often a system of dualism, in which God has governed half the universe, and Satan the other half. This was because the religious life had not gone down deep enough to enable men to see the power of good to overcome evil. They have not believed that love can conquer sin, and that peace can prevail over war. Their theology consequently was a representation of this unbelief in God. For as God is essentially goodness, not to believe in the omnipotence of goodness is to doubt the almightiness of the Deity. Therefore they thought to uphold religion by terror; to save men by the fear of hell; to prevent heresy by persecution; to defend the truth by inflicting bodily torture, — in short, they sought to cast out Satan by the help of Satan. The doctrine of an everlasting hell, by the side of an eternal heaven, is a system of dualism which denies the sovereignty of God. It has been the outgrowth of a low spiritual state, deficient in faith, hope, and love. The new theology will strive for that more robust confidence in the power of goodness, as represented by Christ, which believes that love will reign until all enemies are put under its feet; until death and hell are cast into the lake of fire; until every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that love is king, to the glory of God the Father. To those who would bring down the fires of hell from heaven to destroy the enemies of God, Christ says now, as at first, "Ye know not what spirit ye are of!"

In all the discussions on the Messiahship of Jesus, it has not been noticed sufficiently, if at all, that to say that Jesus is the Christ, is to say that the principle of love incarnate in him is not merely goodness, but also power; for Christ means King. To confess Jesus as the Christ is to declare that goodness is the real king of the world; that good can overcome evil; that love is mightier than force, truth than fraud; and that to forgive an enemy is the only sure way to conquer him. This has not been understood, because it has not been believed. Men have believed that love was beautiful, true, heavenly, good, — but *not* that it was all-powerful, not that it was the Christ, the king. It was to be rewarded in the other world by the interposition of an almighty force, and evil to be punished by the like force; which again is casting out Satan by the help of Satan. But the new theol-

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ogy will proclaim that goodness, truth, love, are omnipotent by their own nature, in all worlds; that all evil is transient, sin having no real substance in it; and that, in the power of this faith, Christianity must conquer. This is the true cross of Christ, by which the world is crucified to us and we to the world; and only in this faith can Christianity triumph.

Finally, the new theology will be not exclusive, but inclusive; not building walls around the church as though it were a fort to be defended, but sending out laborers to reap harvests wherever the divine husbandman has scattered the seed. The new theology will enlarge the borders of its tent so as to include all the truths in science, art, literature, and philosophy; and in all the ethnic religions. If God has shown anything to the world by Confucius or Zoroaster, by Buddha or Mohammed, by Socrates or Plato, the large hospitality of the future theology will open wide its doors to receive it. Thus shall Christ bring together in one all the scattered rays of truth, and his great atonement be more largely illustrated and more fully understood. The central doctrines of Christianity will still be the *incarnation* and the *atonement*,—God manifested in humanity, and the making all things at one in Christ. Instead of men being obliged to repeat the same creed, and to express their faith in the same language, every man shall praise God in the tongue in which he was born, and listen to the wonderful works of God uttered in the language of his own thought. There shall be diversities of gifts, but the same spirit, and diversities of operation, but the same God working all in all. The harsh, polemic theology will disappear, and an irenic theology take its place. Discussion and inquiry will continue, but the bitter controversies which have disgraced the church will end. Then, when there is a new heaven, there will be a new earth. When wars cease to rage in the spiritual world, they will come to an end in the material sphere. When Christians again love each other, and work together, they will be able to conquer the evils which afflict humanity. Only a united church can save the world from the hells of sin and shame which still pollute the heart of Christendom.

And now friends, brethren, and sisters, members of this National Conference, do you ask, "What shall *we* do? What work remains for us?" The old theologies against which our fathers protested are dead or dying. You may say then, "Is not our work done?" Not quite; there are some things still left for us to do. Though the spirit

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of the new theology is all around us, the letter of the old theology holds its place in the creeds of all the churches. We have seen how reluctant they are to give up such outgrown symbols as the Athanasian Creed and the Assembly's Catechism. Amid the wreck of faith, they even cling more closely to these iron formulas, reminding us of the story in the Greek jest-book, of the fellow who, when the ship was sinking clung to the anchor to save himself. We may understand and respect the feeling which dictates this reluctance to cast aside forever the ancient forms which have expressed the faith of the Church for hundreds or thousands of years. But the church should be like the noble apostle, and say, "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things." If all else is shipwrecked, let us at least save our own sincerity and honesty. We, who have inhabited a church without a creed for so long, can encourage others to do the same; to forget the things behind, and reach out to those before. And if there be in any of our sister denominations a man too honest to seem to confess a faith which he no longer holds, we can open to him our doors and our hearts, and welcome him to a platform where all can stand together who wish to follow Jesus in endeavoring to save humanity from its sorrows and its sins.

But, most of all, let us remember and repeat the truth with which we began,—that no new theology can replace the old, which does not represent a higher life. Except our righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, we shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven. Out of a higher life and the theology of the spirit alone will come a higher form of doctrinal thought.

Why offer men a new doctrinal theology, if all you can say of it is that it is more reasonable than the old? Did the Greek and Roman world renounce Paganism because Christianity was more reasonable than their old dogmas concerning Zeus and Demeter? No! but because it brought them nearer to a God of love, a Father in heaven; because it made immortal life a reality, and filled their hearts with peace and rest. Did Luther and Calvin and Melancthon shake Europe to its centre, and overturn dogmas and rituals rooted in men's convictions during ten centuries, merely by offering them a more advanced form of thought, and a more liberal and rational doctrine? The electric force of the Reformation in its origin was that it proclaimed a God ready to forgive sin without priest or sacrament, as

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soon as men were ready to trust themselves to his divine grace. In both cases the religion came first, the rational theology afterward. Being first rooted and grounded in love, they then became able to comprehend with all saints what was the length and breadth and depth and height of that which passeth knowledge.

Every advance in doctrinal theology, if it is to be extensive and radical, must come from the higher theology which produces a revival of religion,—a new incarnation of the divine Word. In that divine fire the most rigid dogmas melt, and become fluid. Logical reasoning, irrefutable arguments, eloquent rhetoric,—these are like sounding brass, unless warmed by the heavenly flame of love. But if, casting aside all the old creeds, we advance into a higher religion; if we evidently are walking with God, dwelling in his peace, living better lives; more honest and more honorable in our business; helping on all reforms which save men from wrong and woe; if we preach good news to the poor, comfort to the broken-hearted, light to the ignorant, help to the afflicted,—then men will gladly listen to us, and follow our teaching. The new theology which is to be the universal belief of Christendom will not be a cold system of rational opinions, however ably formulated, but the natural efflux and expression of a higher Christian life. In order to believe our doctrine to be Christian, men must take knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus.

Let us then, brethren and sisters, seek for the truths which will become a part of our experience, by which we can live joyfully and die peacefully. Let us seek first and always, not for freedom or advanced thought, but for living truth,—for the truths which feed the soul, and make God, eternity, duty, heaven, as real and solid as the outward universe of suns and stars.

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THE NEW ETHICS.*

BY PROF. C. C. EVERETT.

Among the phrases that have sprung from our modern thought and life there is none that seems to most so strange and ominous as that which speaks of a new morality. Men are slowly accustoming themselves to novelty in other things. All things else — the form of government, the forms, even, of religion — concern the superstructure; morality is the foundation. Disturb anything else, and the building may still stand; disturb this, and the whole falls in ruin. Beneath a building of wood or stone one may place screws and hold it safely poised, while the underpinning is adjusted or even changed; science, the result of ages of experience, may insure the safety of the new foundation. But what power shall hold poised the great structure of society while its foundation is renewed, and what science can assure us of the stability of supports as yet untried?

The wise counsel of the Preacher Robertson has comforted many a bewildered soul. No matter, he said, in effect, how one may doubt in regard to spiritual matters; so long as one holds fast to moral principle, one is safe. But how if this last support fails, if the right gives way beneath the feet of him who hoped that he was on the eternal rock; what help or hope remains? And to many the new morality seems like no morality.

This dread is heightened by the immoralities of the time. When one meets example after example of brutality, which its nearness, perhaps also its comparative rarity, makes appear almost unprecedented; and of financial untrustworthiness in men who had been most loved and honored, one is tempted to hold the new ethics responsible for it all. Indeed, without deciding the questions at issue between the new and the old, we may admit some reason for this fear of change. Even if the old were no better than the new, the period of transition might be one of license.

In the ages of the past, we find traces of a like dread. Prominent

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among the charges brought by Aristophanes against Socrates was that of teaching a new morality. The father in the play sends his son to Socrates that he may learn some power of sophistry by which he can outwit his creditors; but he is disgusted when the son learns from the same teacher an art which renders of no effect his own paternal authority, and which, by a reversal of the time-honored relation between parent and child, forces the old man to submit to be flogged by the young representative of the new ethics.

But this very example suggests another aspect of the case. Socrates taught, indeed, a new morality; his contemporaries were filled with dread and anger; but the fresh foundation which he laid has been that upon which modern society has found rest. And was not Jesus the teacher of a new morality? "Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time—but I say unto you,"— Such was the form of his teaching. It was a new morality, setting itself up proudly and confidently against the old.

The theme, then, is a grave one. It concerns a matter where every change is full of peril; yet such a change in great epochs of the past has given new stability to human society,—has enabled it to rest secure through revolutions in thought and life. No place is here for rash experiment; but at the same time there is no place for a prejudice that shall condemn absolutely and unheard.

The theme has other difficulties. The new morality is something as yet incomplete. It is as yet largely tentative. It presents itself under various forms and in various degrees. Theories of morality designed to illustrate, to support, or to complete the new ethics, have multiplied themselves in these latter days to an almost incredible extent. At the first glance it seems difficult, if not impossible, to determine to what the name actually belongs. A more careful observation shows, however, that beneath all these theories, and common to them all, are certain well-defined principles. These have their marked characteristics. They may be easily and sharply distinguished from the principles of what I must, for the sake of the antithesis, call the old ethics. It is these principles that I have now to present and to illustrate.

In entering upon this discussion, I wish it understood that it is not my object to present, under the title of "The New Morality," my own ethical views. My object is, to present a study of one aspect of the thought and life of the age in which we live,—something which

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is far more important than the views of any individual. The terms by which I shall describe this may seem to some terms of praise, and to others, of blame. They are intended as neither. My aim is to approach the theme with historical or even judicial impartiality. But though this simply historical statement is my primary object, I shall, before concluding, attempt to estimate the worth of the new morality, and to determine to what extent, if at all, it is destined to replace the old.

The first contrast between what we must call the old ethics and the new, and perhaps the most important of all, is, that the old morality is absolute, while the new is relative. According to the old, the question as to why the right is right has no place. The right is right, simply because it is right. The new is not content with this simple statement. It will go behind this absolute claim. It will demand its credentials of this absolute law-giver. It asks, not in the spirit of rebellion but in that of scientific inquiry, what it is that makes the right right. At this very beginning there opens a gulf between the two that seems impassable. The old morality feels that to give any reason for right-doing, beyond the fact that it is right, would be to degrade righteousness. If right-doing had any other ground of authority than the moral law, this ground must be found in something higher than the moral law; but the recognition of any thing more authoritative than the moral law, it feels would be treason to morality. On the other hand, the new morality judges that if the right can give no reason for itself, it is unreasonable. It is ready to obey its law just as soon as the claim can be justified, and not before.

The breach between the two is widened when the new morality begins to answer its own question, and to show why the right, or what it calls such, should be obeyed. The right is right, it affirms, because it is useful. Utilitarianism, under one form or another, is the one principle common to all theories which represent the new morality; and utilitarianism is what the old morality holds most in abhorrence. The antithesis of which it is most fond is that between the right and the expedient; and utilitarianism takes the expedient,—the expedient in the largest possible sense of the term, it is true,—and places it on the throne of the right.

I have said that utilitarianism *under one form or another* is a principle common to all theories in which the new morality has taken form. I suppose that utilitarianism, pure and simple, may be con-

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sidered as practically among the things of the past. This theory, it is easy to see, divided itself into two possible forms. According to the one, right action was based upon the advantage resulting directly or indirectly to the actor; according to the other, upon the advantage resulting to the community. It is easy to see that so far as consequences to one's self are concerned, the consideration of these gives to actions no moral character whatever; while if personal advantage be the end in view, there is no gnarantee that the individual should not take the matter into his own hands, and seek to gain the ends that seem to him the best by the ways that seem to him the surest and the most direct. On the other hand, if advantage to the community be the end sought, the matter is left where the theory found it; for the question still presses, Why should the individual, at the cost of his own personal advantage, seek the public good? Further, this theory, in common with all theories that would base moral action upon some open, easily comprehended principle, according to which the individual should consciously guide his life, loses sight of the most important and efficient element of the moral law; I refer to the element of mystery. The moral law has owed its power, in a great measure, to the fact that it holds its seat in the secret recesses of the nature, or upon some inaccessible height above nature, from whence its demands issue with an authority not to be resisted or gainsaid. We may illustrate this aspect of the moral law by the discipline of a ship. Measured by the results, every act of every sailor, so far as the management of the ship is concerned, has for its end the general good. The sailors expose themselves to the fierceness of cold and tempest, they peril and often sacrifice their lives for the common cause. A stranger regarding their movements from the outside would find the most perfect exemplification of the utilitarian theory. But utility, though the measure and standard, is not the direct cause of their activity. If it were, a sailor might sometimes hesitate long before trusting himself on the perilous yard in the night and the tempest; or, even if all were well-disposed, the ship might go to the bottom while the men were discussing different possible methods of management. The source of authority is the captain's will. In the ship, his will has a mysterious and unquestioned supremacy. There is to be no hesitation and no discussion. The sailor does what he does, often having no guess as to the reason why. Utility, according to Kant's dictum, in the larger field of morals, is the measure but not the cause of the activity.

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This illustrates the element which lends its peculiar authority to the moral law. If the new morality would in any sense replace the old, it must assert, as its vital element, some such principle as this. Morality must be shown to have at least the authority of an instinct.

The new ethics cannot give up the principle of utilitarianism, which is its life; but the difficulties with the doctrine as at first announced, were too real to remain unnoticed. The doctrine was retained; and the difficulties, which I have discribed, were removed, by one of the most ingenious and profound suggestions that have marked the history of thought. We have considered the principle of utility merely in relation to the life of the individual. We have supposed this life to begin without predisposition, and to be guided by conscious choice. Such was the view of the earlier teachers of utilitarianism. But let us take into account the great principle of heredity; let the sense of utility, of the needs of society, of the demands which the whole makes upon each part, have gathered strength through innumerable generations; let all irregularities of time and place be eliminated from the result, because such irregularities will go for nothing in the great mass; and let the combined, intensified, and purified result enter into the constitution of the individual; let it be born with him, and twined in with every fibre of the brain, and we have a result far more satisfactory than any which we have before reached. This is the result which is taken for granted by the new ethics. In the language of Spenser, "The experiences of utility, organized and consolidated through all past generations of the human race, have been producing corresponding modifications, which by continued transmission and accumulation have become in us certain faculties of moral intuition."

We have thus the elements of a mysterious authority, whose decisions are not to be questioned or explained, which acts from the depths of the nature, and which thus represents the "categorical imperative" which we seek.

This result would seem at first sight to bring the new morality into greater harmony with the old. In reality it widens the breach between the two. We have seen the old ethics to be absolute, and the new, relative in their conceptions of the right. The old morality is farther absolute in its conception of the source of moral authority in the soul. It insists that the moral instinct was one of the original endowments of man; or else, that the moral law is the direct voice of

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God making itself heard by the soul, whether it be willing or unwilling to listen. Upon this directness and spontaneity it bases much of its reverence for morality. According to the new ethics, the moral law is the outgrowth of experience. It is not that the soul has impressed itself upon the world; the world has moulded the soul. The moral law comes not from within, outward; it begins on the outside. It has its source in the circumstances of human life, not in that life itself.

One or two further considerations will bring the two systems into a yet sharper antithesis. The new morality insists that usefulness is the measure of right. Another question forces itself upon us, if the answer just given is to have any meaning,—"The right is the useful:" the phrase says nothing till we know what is meant by usefulness. What is the great end its ministry for which gives any act moral pre-eminence? This question has been too much overlooked by utilitarian moralists, and the answer when given has been sometimes as ambiguous as the phrase it would explain. Useful for happiness has, perhaps, been the most common explanation; but this leaves the whole matter still open. All men seek happiness. Who can say that the happiness of the saint is greater than that of the sensualist? By what test at the command of the utilitarian can we decide that the one form of happiness is of a higher grade, or a finer texture, than the other? The old morality has no difficulty in furnishing such a test; the new has found in this discrimination its hardest task.

And yet there is but one answer to the question, "Useful for what?" which the new morality, if it be wholly consistent with itself, can give. This answer must be found in the philosophy which underlies the thought most peculiar to the age; I mean the philosophy which is identified with the theory of development by natural selection. To the question under consideration, this philosophy can give but one answer, viz., Useful for existence. Its fundamental principle is, "The Struggle for Existence." Its favorite phrase is, "The survival of the fittest." In this phrase the word "fittest" means simply that which is the best fitted to its surroundings, that to which existence is therefore the easiest. Everything is tested by its adaptation to this end. The existence aimed at is mere existence. It does not mean primarily, even happiness. Happiness of a certain kind is favorable to existence. There is no such drain upon the vital

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force as misery. Unhappiness gives a friction to life which makes living difficult. For this reason happiness has worth for the philosophy we are considering; not as an end in itself, but as a means to the end; and this end is existence. Its motto would be, not "The greatest good of the greatest number," whatever meaning may be implied by the word good; but, "The most prolonged existence for the greatest number." Still less, if possible, would the term "existence" include any moral quality. Morality, by its very definition, being synonymous with utility, and utility having reference to the mere fact of existence, existence can derive no nobility from this. A full existence has no advantage over an empty one, except that the full, having more points of contact with the world than the empty, has an advantage in the great struggle for life.

We have thus a fresh, and if possible a more striking antithesis between the old and the new morality. To the old, goodness was the great end of life. It is for this that men live. Existence is for the sake of right-doing. To the new morality, right-doing is for the sake of existence. To the old, there is an impassable gulf between the moral demand and its fulfilment. Man exists in order to fulfil the moral law; and because this law is infinite in its requirements, man shall exist forever. To the new, man exists because he and his ancestors have on the whole done that which is right. His existence upon the earth is the reward of virtue.

We have thus compared the new ethics and the old, so far as their theoretical bases are concerned; and we have found them at every point sharply opposed to one another. We have now to consider the two in their practical relations. If they are as diverse in their requirements as they are in their theories, there can be only war between them so long as they shall both endure. If, however, we should find that, while differing so widely on all points of theory, they yet unite, to any considerable extent, in urging the same duties, then they may be co-workers to the same end. So far as the new morality is concerned, there is a still deeper question to be answered. Can it furnish a basis for any system of practical duties whatever; or are its demands as variable as the circumstances which make up the outward life of man? As taught by Mr. Darwin, it would seem to be open at least to doubt in this regard; and it was her perception of this fundamental deficiency that drew from Miss Cobbe her indignant protest against the "Ethics of Darwinism." In this matter, however,

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we need not accept as final the words of any teacher. Even the founder of a theory cannot be trusted to interpret with infallible correctness all its manifold relations. Neither accepting nor condemning then, the results of any exponent of Darwinism, let us look directly at the theory itself. We have then to ask what form of human character does the principle of natural selection tend to produce? The general answer is, of course, that natural selection tends to produce the character most in harmony with its environment. But what, it must be asked again, is meant by the environment? This has two forms. The first is the natural and physical facts of the world; the other is the structure of the society into which any individual is born. So far as moral character is concerned, this last is the more important. In this aspect, the law of the survival of the fittest has no reference to any fixed and arbitrary standard. It means simply that he who is best fitted to succeed in any community will have the advantage, and will tend to impress his moral nature upon his descendants. There are in the physical world certain fundamental characteristics which are necessary to life everywhere,—certain malformations that would be fatal anywhere. The blood must be oxygenated, the food must be received and assimilated. In other respects, the form varies infinitely. There may be innumerable degrees of strength, of size, and of conformation and relation of organs. If the creature is to live in the water, or on the land, or in the air; if its food is to be of one kind or another, its whole structure will adapt itself to these circumstances. This adaptation will descend to the most minute elements of the environment. It will answer to them as the clay answers to its mould. The same law of natural selection produced the whale, the minnow, and the devil-fish; the serpent, the sloth, and the hare; the lion and the lamb; the hawk and the dove. If the social environment of man varies less than the physical environment of the animal, it varies no less really. There are, of course, certain kinds and degrees of immorality that are everywhere fatal to success. A certain degree of honor, the proverb tells us, is necessary if one would preserve his social standing in a company of thieves. But beyond the avoidance of the most gross and open violations of the social compact, there is little that is everywhere and always excluded by the demands of the social environment. The man who was fitted to succeed in the early days of the Roman republic would have failed in the latter days of the empire; and one whom

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the social elements of the empire pushed into prominence would have fared hardly in the republic. Thus is the social environment ever changing, and the demands made upon the moral nature by success vary indefinitely. Indeed, the societies in which the highest and finest moral attributes are a passport to success are very rare. The "fittest" in the moral sense and the "fittest" in the sense of Darwinism are not often the same. Certainly, neither in Athens nor at Jerusalem was moral perfection one with fitness to survive; and Mr. Gregg has fairly proved to us that in European society the law of the survival of the fittest has, in many ways, opposed the production and survival of the best. If the new morality have no better basis than this law, it rests upon very sandy foundations; or, if we regard the present relation of the social factors as one of stable equilibrium, our moral code must be, to a large extent, reconstructed; and in this reconstruction the demands of what has been generally recognized as the moral nature must be largely ignored. It is probably from some such view of the new morality that a writer in one of the best read, if not one of the most read, journals of our time, refers thus to an author who had affirmed his belief in the theory of Darwinism: "We do not believe," he says, "that this author is at all prepared to accept the changes which this new view of the laws of growth would work in practical ethics, in our treatment of paupers and criminals, for example, and our views of marriage and culture. We doubt if he is ready to say that it is vastly more important to prevent a criminal from having descendants than it is to reform him; and we are confident that he does not regard it as being as much the duty of healthy men to marry young as to acquire culture and do great deeds; more wrong to marry a sickly person for love than a strong one for money. And these new ethics will find as little to support them, in the ascetic self-subjugation of the older time, as in the sentimental fear of taking life of the new."*

I do not know whether the writer from whom I have just quoted is, or is not, in sympathy with Darwinism, and with the system of ethics that he believes to grow out of it; whether the passage was written in good faith or as satire. In this view, the "struggle for existence" is one in which physical strength and worldly wisdom are the great weapons of success. Even from this point of view it would be difficult to make the statement quite consistent with itself,—to explain,

* The *Nation*, Aug. 2, 1877.

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for instance, why a criminal should be killed in order that he might have no descendants; and the person who sees in marriage only a form of money-making should be encouraged to have them; why it is so much worse to violate the laws of property than to degrade the highest moral instincts; why worse to obtain money on a fraudulent promise of repayment of money than to obtain, we will say, money, under a fraudulent promise of repayment in love.

To see the full bearing of the passage, we need to look behind one or two phrases. To marry for money is not necessarily to marry according to the laws of health; to marry for love is not necessarily to marry unhealthily. In a community where self-interest should control all marriages, not all the descendants would be healthy; but all would, in time, be selfish. In a community where all marriages should be for love, all the descendants would not be unhealthy, but there would be a tendency to unselfishness in all.

It is not my business, however, to explain, to justify, or to condemn, the passage I have quoted. I have referred to it simply to illustrate what I conceive to be a very common view of the kind of morality which would result if Darwinism should become the established philosophy of the time. Perhaps also it illustrates the change and confusion in regard to the standard of morality which would actually be produced by recognition in its fullest extent of the law of natural selection as we have thus far regarded it.

But there is another aspect of this law. It has a broader field of application than any which we have thus far considered, and in this broader field its demands are absolute and inflexible.

I may introduce a consideration of this new aspect of the case by reference to a difficulty which Mr. Darwin tells us he met while working out his system. The difficulty was suggested by the presence of the sterile workers among the bees. This seemed at first sight, he tells us, fatal to his whole theory. It is obvious that sterility is nothing that can be hereditary. Moreover, even the tendency to sterility is directly opposed to the success of any class of beings in the struggle for existence. Soon, however, the thought of the great naturalist took a wider range. Any class of individuals, considered merely as individuals, with whom such a tendency should exist, would tend to extinction; but a community is not merely a collection of individuals; it is itself an individual. The principle of natural selection applies as really to communities as to the individuals that compose them.

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These also are subjected to the struggle for existence, and here also it is the fittest who survive. The community of bees that should develop a class of sterile workers would have thereby an immense advantage over those that did not, and would endure while they would perish. Schopenhauer had long before expressed the thought that the community of bees, for example, develops classes of members adapted to special functions, just as a body develops organs. And now Darwin shows that these organizations are as plastic under the great force which controls the development of life as the single organisms themselves. Thus the difficulty that threatened the destruction of the Darwinian theory was a means of opening to it a wide sweep of applications, of which its founder at first had not dreamed.

The same principle comes to our aid in seeking in the theory of Darwinism a basis for morality. We have found that the principle of natural selection would vary in its action according to the nature of the social environment. One society would favor the development of honesty and honor; another that of cunning and hypocrisy. In one, gluttony and sensuality and kindred vices would sink a man to the lowest stratum of society; in another, they would buoy him up so that he should float upon the highest. But here at last we have a principle to which these social conditions are themselves amenable. One society will develop one type of character; another, another; but according to the type of character which it favors will it stand or fall. Here we find a recognition by the facts of history of the fundamental distinctions of right and wrong. What we call righteousness is the only enduring basis upon which society can rest. We are told much of the "Power not ourselves that makes for righteousness." We have, perhaps, all wished that the author of the phrase would explain to us more clearly the method of the working of this power. Here at last it manifests itself. It is present as a power of judgment, if not of creation. The nations that work iniquity, that despise justice, that lose themselves in the revels of the senses, are at last dashed to pieces like a potter's vessel; and a purer, stronger, and less corrupted race succeeds.

We see, thus, how the principle of natural selection may, and often does, fall into collision with itself. Under one form it develops a type of character which under another it destroys. In the Roman Empire it was this that led the Caracallas and the Caligulas to the supreme position; and it was this that destroyed the Roman Empire, because

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its social conditions were such as to foster the growth of characters like those to whom I have referred. Such is the irony of this ruler of the world.

The general conditions of human society are the same everywhere. In a valuable article upon the "Ethics of Darwinism,"* Mr. Francis E. Abbot has compared these conditions to the fundamental relations which make of mathematics an *a priori* science. These are the principles in accordance with which the terrible power of natural selection works in the large relations which we are here considering.

Perhaps, indeed, it is to this larger aspect of the case that the passage which I quoted a short time ago refers. I mean the passage in which physical strength was made the one supreme thing, in which a calculating meanness that favored this was exalted so high above a generous love that ignored it, in which the natural sympathies of the heart were to be suppressed in order that vice and poverty might be suppressed in their turn. Here at last may be the field where the survival of the fittest means simply the survival of the strongest; where the struggle for existence leaves no place for delicacy or refinement or idealism or chivalric extravagance; where all must be calculating and hard, and a sensible selfishness is more to the purpose than an extravagant love. But even in this battle of the Titans, this struggle for existence, in which it is nation against nation, and race against race, such teaching misinterprets the laws that preside over the great strife.

These laws are gentle as they are terrible. See their working in the life and death conflict which is waged in the whole realm of the lower nature, in which bird and beast secure their place in this overcrowded world, where each survives only at the cost of multitudes that perish. Here, if anywhere, would be manifested the sternness of these laws, their contempt for anything but brute force. Shall we utter here teaching such as that to which I have referred? Shall we say, Strength is everything; in this fierce battle he who can best seize his prey and fight down his rivals in the chase will be the victor. Shall we bid the nightingale seek weapons like those of the hawk, and the humming-bird change its iridiscent garment for an armor of hard shell that shall protect its tiny life? Little shall we understand the powers that determine the result of the strife, and award his triumph

* *Index*, March 12, 1874.

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to the victor. To them the delicate, the graceful, the tender, the beautiful, are as dear as the fierce and the strong. It was the great law of natural selection itself that taught the nightingale to sing, and that painted the humming-bird with his changeful hues. It is this that whispers to the timid hare to flee, and this that binds the gentle sheep together in their harmless federation.

What is true in the lower world of animal life is no less true in the higher world of man. Here the struggle is no less terrible. Here, also, in the long run, it is the fittest that survives. Long before Darwinism was dreamed of, Emerson sang in his prophetic numbers,—

"For gods delight in gods,
And thrust the weak aside."

But there is another kind of might than hard, gross, bodily force, and in the struggle for existence the battle is not always to the physically strong. Two elements have contributed more than anything else to the success of man in the conflict with the lower animals, and of the civilized man in conflict with the barbarian. One of these is knowledge, or the power of thought; the other is the force of the social instincts. Ideas on the one hand, a self-forgetful devotion on the other,—these are what have won for the higher races the victory. Whatever checks the tendency either to mental development on the one side, or spiritual development on the other, strikes the heaviest possible blow at the stability of the social organism.

Physical strength, brute force, whether of body or will, is nothing to be spoken lightly of. It is something to be sought and cherished by wise prevision. It is only when the lower force is urged in despite of the higher spiritual forces that we protest. Sleek and prosperous selfishness gives a certain element of strength to a society. For a time it may furnish to it a stable foundation. But it furnishes a power of disintegration as well. In times of peril, selfishness will give its money, it will not give its life, for the common cause. It is not the children of a line of ancestors that have been bound together in each generation by the golden bands of self-interest that, in a moment of peril, a nation can summon to its defence. It is not those that have learned to repress the natural instincts of humanity, that see no longer the sacredness of human life, that are willing to extirpate suffering by the extirpation of the sufferers,—it is not these that can catch the grand enthusiasm that makes men willing to die

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before they know whether the good they seek can actually be purchased even at that costly price. I am not comparing these different types of character by any sentimental standard. I am bringing them before the bar of that stern power which is now recognized as the Judge of all the earth; and it is in the light of its judgments that I affirm that he who urges on the authority of Darwinism the hard morality that has been described has failed to comprehend the working of those laws of which he speaks.

There is no tenderness of human love, there is no generosity of human charity, there is no self-forgetfulness of a sublime idealism, that does not have its place and its work, even under the hard and stern conditions of the struggle for existence.

A community may be constructed on principles that will crush out these self-forgetting lives. The laws of natural selection applied in the narrow circuit of this community may justify and enforce their extinction. But there is a higher court which sits also for the enforcing of these laws. To this higher court the appeal is always made. At this tribunal the lower decision is reversed; and the community which has disowned all that is tender and chivalric and self-forgetful will in its turn suffer terrible condemnation.

Our twofold question is thus answered. The law of natural selection furnishes a basis for an absolute morality, above all fluctuations, resulting from conditions peculiar to special times and places; and this morality is, on the whole, one with that which the best thought of the world has recognized as such. I do not raise the question whether the existence of the moral sense may or may not be explained by this principle. We have found, simply, that there is no need for fear lest the new science shall undermine virtue. We have found a force working steadily in the direction of a high morality, and have reached a point where the new ethics and the old are in accord.

The two systems, then, while theoretically at absolute variance, are practically working together towards the same end. This fact may suggest the question whether the theoretical antagonism between the two implies a real hostility; whether the antithesis may not rather be called polar; whether they do not represent opposite sides of the same thing, or are not the outgrowths of opposite but inseparable tendencies of thought and life. An examination will show that this is the case. There are recognized in the thought of most, and in the practical life of all, two principles, in appearance utterly antagonistic

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to one another. These are the principles of freedom and necessity. Logically destructive of one another, practically they are recognized as common factors of life.

Theodore Parker once gave, if I remember rightly, about three parts out of a hundred of the result of any life to freedom, the rest to necessity. Really, the relation is a variable one; in some lives, even the "three parts" would be hard to find. In others, freedom is a constantly-increasing factor. These principles have embodied themselves in the systems of morality we have been considering. The old morality represents the idea of freedom; the new that of necessity. According to the old, every man is the absolute master of himself; according to the new, every man is the creature of circumstances. I have said that in common life both these principles are practically recognized. The parent believes that the character of his child is ultimately to rest upon the choice of the child himself; yet he seeks by education and surroundings to force the child into the ways of virtue, and to ward off evil influences, as if the child were wholly at their mercy I am not going to discuss the old question, and to seek a solution of the difficulties that so many have found insoluble. It is enough for us here to have found the secret of the divergence between the two systems of ethics, and to recognize the fact that, till the old strife between freedom and necessity is at an end, each of these systems will find its place and its work.

Another consideration may help us to understand how two systems, practically in accord, may stand, theoretically, in such sharp antithesis, even while it contributes nothing toward the solution of this antithesis. I refer to the partialness of each statement. It is easy to see that both end in incompleteness. The one affirms an absolute right which can neither be explained nor justified; the other makes its highest term existence, without object or fulfilment. But the law of right implies imperfection in its subject. The moral law, as such, exists so far as love is absent. As the Jewish law was the schoolmaster to lead men to Christ, so the moral law everywhere prepares the way for, or takes the place of, a wise and thoughtful love. As Jesus said, "Love is the fulfilling of the law."

On the other hand, the law of natural selection itself may show us how the individual exists in and for the community. This is only a statement from the outside of that which, when consciously adopted as the true meaning of life, is expressed from the inside as the law of

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love. The maker of the musical instrument aims simply to produce accuracy and purity of tone. Who could tell in advance the magnificence of the result when the single instrument lends itself to form part of the grand harmony of the completed composition? The law of natural selection aims at existence only; but when the existence of the individual is given up for that of the whole, there come a beauty and glory that transfigure the result.

In spite of the fundamental accord between the two systems in practical relations, the different principles which they embody will introduce superficial, yet very marked differences, into the practical working of the two types of morality.

I. The old morality is stern. It judges pitilessly, throwing the burden of his misdeeds wholly upon the wrong-doer. The new is gracious and sympathetic. It seeks excuses and palliations; so far as it blames at all, and its blame is simply the seeking of the nearest cause of the result, it lays the burden of the guilt, not on the wrong-doer himself, but upon the society that has made him what he is.

II. The old morality is unpractical. It utters its commands, and leaves them to execute themselves. The new is practical. It seeks so to arrange the circumstances of each life that its demands shall inevitably be fulfilled.

III. The old morality, though terribly radical when its way is perfectly clear before it, is yet often blindly conservative. Having confessedly no outward test of right and wrong, it sometimes confounds traditions and prejudices with intuitions. It adopts some institution as divinely given, or as expressing some fundamental element of right, and launches the terrors of its wrath against all who would disturb it. The new has an external test; viz., utility. This test it applies fearlessly. It is thus absolutely radical. For it the prestige of years, the claims of divine appointment or of inherent sanctity amount to nothing. The whole world is open to its reforming touch.

In this comparison the old morality may appear at some disadvantage; but we must bear in mind that if the new morality could entirely supplant it, there would remain no morality worthy of the name. It is the free act of the soul in choosing the right that gives to it any moral character in the highest sense of the word. We may make this choice easy and natural, or we may surround it with difficulties; but in any case it is this which is, morally speaking, the vital point of every act.

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IV. The old morality placed itself outside of all historical relations. The moral sense being one of the original constituents of human nature, it existed from the first fully formed. The only historical change which it can undergo is that of a greater or less debasement. The new morality recognizes the principle of development in moral relations as well as in all others. Nowhere has greater intellectual activity been displayed than in the search for the conditions under which the germs of the moral sense first present themselves, and those under which it arises to an ever fuller consciousness of its own nature. These circumstances cannot, I believe, account for the existence of the moral idea, any more than in the wise judgment of its founder, the theory of natural selection can account for life. But the moral principle, like life, must have had a beginning in the world, and a history. There must have been conditions under which alone its first and lowest manifestations were possible; and those which have controlled the form of its development. Let it be that it is in its source supernatural; it must yet, as the Christian Church itself could teach us, in the story of its founder, be born out from, and into, the conditions of the earthly history. Thus though we need to receive with the most cautious criticism all historical results offered to account for the rise of morality in the world; though there needs to be placed a check on the rashness of speculation that thinks it has accounted for everything the history of which it has described, we may have only welcome for all efforts to throw light upon the genesis of the moral idea, and thus to solve questions, perhaps the most important and the most difficult of any that grow out of our human history.

Let us now glance at certain of the practical methods of the new ethics, in order to find illustrations of some of the characteristics that have been described.

It need hardly be remarked that in the new morality it is the active virtues that bear the palm. It was once enough, as Thoreau phrases the contrast, that the saint was good; he must now show himself to be good for something. Virtue is not merely a system of moral gymnastics; it is the striving towards certain definite practical results. In this effort the most delicate social problems receive a fresh solution, and the most fundamental relations a fresh adjustment.

The institution of marriage offers itself as one of the most striking examples of such treatment. This will be clear if we consider that nearly all our States permit divorce, and that the only churches which

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absolutely condemn divorce, and forbid their clergy to marry parties that have been divorced, are those which are bound most firmly to the old order.

The relation of husband and wife, and in general the relation of woman to the State, has undergone a like change. The new morality recognizes no superiority or inferiority between the sexes. It may admit that husband and wife are one, but it watches with impartial interest to see, as the old phrase has it, which is the one. Or rather it regards them as two, each having special interests, that may stretch immeasurably on either side beyond what is included in the little life of the family. Of the tendencies that would press beyond the limits I have named, that would do away with the restraints of marriage or with marriage itself, I do not speak. These represent not the new morality, but the old immorality.

In the larger realm of the State, we find like changes. Indeed, here the relation of things has been completely inverted. Men used to speak of the divine right of the king; now the talk is of the divine right of the people. Before, the great stress was laid upon submission to the powers that be; now the great stress is laid upon the duty of governments to their people. A man's duties to the State are those which he wears the lightest.

The relation of the different members of the State to one another has been also changed. Especially is this true of the relation between the rich and the poor. The time has been when poverty was felt to be, to some extent, a mark of sanctity. Your tramp would lack little of being regarded, if not as a saint, at least as a very good representative of one. Poverty was regarded as, in a double sense, a means of grace. The poor themselves were not far from the kingdom of heaven; at the same time they furnished one of the readiest means of salvation to their richer neighbors. It was the poor who carried the souls of the rich to heaven. Thus poverty was to be comforted and solaced. It was to be in some superficial way ameliorated. The poor were at any event to be kept alive. But the idea of doing away with poverty would have been considered, if not sacrilegious, at least hardly desirable. The life of poverty was indeed the ideal life. This whole state of things has changed. "God's poor," said the old morality; "The devil's poor," would say the new if it spoke its whole thought. Poverty is not the blessing, but the curse of society. The whole social effort is not so much to ameliorate it as to abolish it.

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Charity, instead of being regarded as the ideal virtue, is, at least under its old form, regarded as a weakness if not as a vice. "If you would help men," cries the new morality, "help them to help themselves." "Give to him that asketh thee," cried the old. "Give to nobody that asks thee," cries the new; "send beggars to the central committee;" and to this central committee, it says, "If you give anything, give work." In harmony with its fundamental principle, the new morality, in its most exaggerated form, would like to withhold aid altogether, to leave only the fittest to survive. Since it cannot so far suppress the natural feelings of its followers, perhaps not even of its most extreme exponents, it would at least simply help men to be able to hold their own in the great struggle. Believing in the controlling influence of the environment, it would seek to bring into the surroundings of the poor all cheerful and healthful influences. When superfluities are to be given to the sick or the needy, the old morality would give, perhaps, tracts; the new gives flowers and fruits. Its great instrument is, under one form or another, education. Its highest ambition is, however, to so use the laws of *heredity* as to reach the best results. It would introduce, if it knew how, the principle of artificial selection. It is, however, still wrestling with the lower problem, and has hardly dared to face the higher. We have as yet working towards that end little save statistics,—those advance-couriers of reform. The new morality in its natural unexaggerated shape is not less charitable than the old; it is even more so. It is more difficult to study all the circumstances of the life of a poor person, and then to help him as he may need, than it is to make a careless gift of money, just as the practice of a scientific physician is more toilsome than that of a quack who has his one panacea for every ill. And when, in the future, men look back upon the path up which the race has climbed, I believe that the saints of what we call the new morality will receive a homage of gratitude and praise equal, at least, to that rendered to the noblest saints of the old.

The treatment of vice by the new morality is akin to its treatment of poverty. Heredity, education and social surroundings are the influences which it would use for its suppression. The old morality would teach the evils of intemperance. The new would open the "People's Club" and the "Holly Tree Inn." Its methods may be insufficient; we may be discouraged by seeing the moral failure of those born and nurtured apparently under the most ideal cir-

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cumstances; but still its methods are those which are indispensable for the best results. They are indispensable, but they are not sufficient. As the free choice, on which the old morality insists, is, as we have seen, the one vital point in any act by which it has moral quality, so the appeal to this, under one form or another, the arousing in a man the sense of being the master of himself and of his own destinies; the sense of the absoluteness, even of the awfulness, of the right,—all of this must form a part, and the highest part, of any system of moral training, if it is to be what its name implies.

In this discussion I have used the words new and old in a somewhat loose and general sense. I have not certainly meant to imply that all the characteristics which I have described as those of the new ethics are peculiar to the morality of this generation. Already, in the beginning of Christianity we find some of the most important of them expressed. The saying of Jesus, "The Sabbath is made for man, not man for the Sabbath," is as thoroughly utilitarian as any saying could be. It illustrates also the utilitarian radicalism. A like radicalism we find yet more strongly embodied in the teaching of Paul, who sought to emancipate his brethren from the whole ceremonial law of the Jews, not even deterred by the thunders of Sinai, and the sacredness of the tables of Moses, from including the Sabbath itself among the forms that were to become obsolete. The prayer of Jesus, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do," and the cry of the apostle, "Consider thyself, lest thou also be tempted," embody the same kind of gracious considerateness that we found to characterize the new morality. What is lacking is the practicality that comes from the development of the science of political economy, and the historical results which had no place in the scheme of the early Church, even had they been within the reach of its founders. At the same time, the New Testament ethics are all alive with that consciousness of human responsibility which forms the chief characteristic of what I have called the old morality. We see thus strikingly illustrated the possibility of a practical reconciliation of the two types. We see also an element which the new morality must never leave out of the account, if it would perform its work aright.

We have already referred to the higher principle of love, towards which both forms of ethics point as the fulfilling of all law. The fact that primitive Christianity was the embodied love, may help us to understand how it could hold in solution elements so diverse. We

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see also the greatest need of the new morality, and perhaps its greatest peril. Dealing, as it so largely does, with statistics, starting as it does, with great general principles, it may be in danger of looking upon men too much in the mass. The truest helpfulness does not recognize what are called the masses; or, if it recognizes them, it is only that it may disintegrate the mass. It has to do with individuals. It loves not merely man; still more does it love men. It was this warmth and tenderness of personal relationship which lent sometimes a certain charm even to what were otherwise the most repulsive forms of the old *regime;* and it is this that the new morality must know how to blend with its love of principles, if it would replace, or still better, if it would worthily fulfil, the Christian ideal.

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CIVIL SERVICE REFORM.

BY GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen:—I am here to redeem—I am sorry to say, very imperfectly—a promise to speak upon some point of the relation between morals and politics. And certainly the times are fruitful of texts, when great parties are dissolving and reorganizing upon a question of simple honesty, namely, whether a nation, like an individual, is morally bound to keep its word. But I venture to hope that, in the exercise of that clemency of which I feel already sure, you will excuse me from any abstract discussion, and allow me to speak plainly of one of the chief sources of immoral politics in this country—the system of our civil service. And if I should seem to strike a note dissonant with the tone of your proceedings, I might plead that our distinguished friend, Dr. Bellows, (who justly holds that his clerical office does not release him from duty as a citizen, but rather imposes upon his profession the duty of moral leadership in politics), is the president of a society for promoting this reform; but in the presence of those who seek higher rules both of public and private living, I shall make no apology. The evil to which I call your attention explains much of what seems to so many observers the moral deterioration of our political character; and its reform, based, as it must be, upon popular intelligence, offers the chief hope of a higher political morality. The statement of what the system is, is the most trenchant appeal to public opinion, and is the most powerful argument for reform. Bear with me, brethren, if it seem to you trite and tedious, for I cannot help feeling that I am doing something to bring morality and politics nearer together when I am telling this story to so many of those who, more than any other class in the community, influence the moral and intelligent sentiment of the country. "I like," said the old English squire, "I like to talk with my rector; for, in talking with him, I am talking with the whole parish."

Now, the principle of the system of the civil service of this country is not new. Bolingbroke described it, nearly two hundred years ago, in England. He and his friends had come into power at the

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head of the state. "Our principal views," said Bolingbroke, "were to the preservation of this power, great employment for ourselves, and great opportunities of rewarding those who had helped to raise us and of hurting those who stood in opposition to us." This was the polished phrase of the Englishman. Hear, now, in our own vernacular, spoken nearly fifty years ago by Samuel Swartwout of the State of New York—hear, now, the doctrine of Bolingbroke, as it is understood by us. Swartwout had hurried to Washington, upon Jackson's inauguration, to get an office; and he writes to an office-seeker in New York, who had begged his aid: "The great goers are the new men, the old troopers being all spavined and ring-boned from previous hard travel. I've got the botts, the fet-lock, hip-joint, gravel, halt and founders, and I assure you, if I can keep my own legs I shall do well; but I'm darned if I can carry any weight with me. * * * Whether or not I shall get anything in the general scramble for plunder remains to be proven, but I rather think I shall." This degrading scramble for plunder, which Swartwout so graphically describes, and with which we are all so familiar; this notorious abuse of the very worst days of English politics, which the good sense of England to-day has entirely discarded, is now known to the politics of the world as the "American system." A change of party administration implies not only a change of the political agents of the new policy, but, with certain important exceptions, of the clerks in every bureau, of the messengers at every door, of the porters and carters of every warehouse, of the keepers of every lighthouse, of the rowers of every custom-house boat, of the washers of floors at posts on the frontier, of the makers of fires in every public building in the country. If a free-trade administration comes in, there must be no trimmer of lamps whose views squint towards protection; and if the friends of internal improvements carry the election, and there be a postmistress anywhere whose cousin, who has a vote, is unsound upon the main question, there are plenty of ladies quite as capable as she, and whose cousins make themselves useful on the right side at the polls. And yet, contemptible as this system is, it is vast, it is thoroughly organized, it ascends in regular gradations from the rower in the boat, from the sweeper of the floor—in regular ascending gradations, each place dependent upon a higher personal favor—until it reaches, at last, the high appointing power of the government. The courtesy of the Senate—a practice of modern introduction—com-

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pletes, at last, this structure, which is a huge hierarchy, grown up within our modern politics and holding us all—every man who has a vote, every man who has a voice—holding us all firmly in its bands, so fast that, as has been wittily said, when we come to an election the only choice between candidates is often that of the race-course, viz., between one horse lame in two legs and another lame in three. It is a system so contemptible—for I do not in the least exaggerate it—that it would be incredible as the practice of a great and intelligent nation, even if it were not so profoundly demoralizing. There is not a midshipman in the navy, there is not an ensign in the army, who is not always and everywhere proud of the buttons and the gold lace that show him to be a naval or a military officer of the United States to whom the honor of the flag and the honor of the national name are entrusted. And yet, by this base practice, is not the word "office-holder" universally a term of reproach, which the character of the incumbent cannot turn aside, because the reproach springs from the humiliating tenure of his office? Once for all, brethren, once for all, I gladly bear witness to the high character of many gentlemen, my personal friends, in the civil service of the United States; but they know more truly than I can tell you that when the emperor Alexander replied to Madame de Stael he told the truth. "Why, sire," said the brilliant Frenchwoman, "surely a despotism may be beneficent." "Aye, madame," replied the emperor, "but it is only a happy accident." The incessant uncertainty, the fear of removal, the necessity of propitiating personal influence, the consciousness that merit is no protection, that there is a constant intrigue to procure change, that servility is safer than honest independence, inevitably tend, as Daniel Webster said forty years ago, to make the office-holders personal parasites. These things corrode their manhood, and consume their self-respect. Men with the same title that Sherman or Farragut had in the service of their country, though without the same brilliancy of record—men with the same title in the civil service of their country—have come to me with the tears in their eyes, have told me of the orders under which they were bound to act, and have declared that they would rather cut off their right hands than obey those orders. But those orders were obeyed, to save the bread in the mouths of their families. Is this not a subject for a moral conference, for religious teachers to consider? Is it morally safe for a nation to insist that the minor business of its public service shall be

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done in a manner which destroys the self respect of those who do it, and their respect, also, for honesty, fidelity and efficiency in the discharge of duty?

But if this be the natural result of this system upon the office-holder, let us see its effect upon general politics. It creates a class, as you see, which is distinctively, in a free republic, a political class. An immediate, personal, selfish, class-interest in politics is created, which is not shared by the rest of the community. The whole management of political affairs gradually slides and falls into their hands. And their object is not the national welfare; it is the dominance of the party; it is the dominance of the power that holds them in place, and the dominance of that special personal control within the party upon which their places depend. Party-spirit, from the first, has been the terror of republics. Well, party-spirit, always rancorous enough, is thus embittered, intensified, infuriated. And meanwhile, like a man who demoralizes the schools, this system seizes young men, young men with the generous ambition of our race to engage in public life. It binds them to its purpose; for they find that the political class holds the gate to nominations and elections; that the whole career which we know as public life, is to be opened only by submission to this hierarchy. Thus the very fact that the practical power of politics is held by what, in this sense, is a mercenary ring in every party, drives self-respecting men out of politics. A late defender of this system argues that the whole minor civil service ought to be political and partisan, because, among other reasons — why? Because so many of you, because so many of the best American citizens, refuse to take part in political affairs. Why, the chief reason of this startling fact — which every intelligent critic of our politics, from De Tocqueville down to our own time, has observed — is the system whose inevitable result is to extinguish generous political ambition, and to set a price upon promotion and success which honorable and independent men are unwilling to pay. Certainly, Mr. President, in your presence, in the presence of the distinguished gentlemen who addressed this audience last night, I shall not be misunderstood as saying that all men distinguished in public life owe their positions to dishonorable methods. When we say that the yellow fever is a plague, desolating New Orleans, we do not say that everybody in New Orleans succumbs to the pest. But the system which thus logically commits the management of politics to what is known as a "ring," united for personal

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and not for public ends; which brings to bear upon every primary and subsequent election the force of bribery of money and place, thereby poisoning the very fountain of government, which is the free popular will — the system which tends to disgust patriotic and intelligent citizens, and exclude them from active part in public affairs, inevitably tends to make a general election precisely what Swartwout called it; not a contest of differing policies of administration determined by argument before the people, but a mad and perilous struggle for the vast emoluments of minor place; so that the successful party enters upon administration with the ferocity of a victorious army forcing its way into a great capital, and overrunning every nook and every corner for plunder. "The great goers," said Swartwout, "are the new men." "Mr. President," said Mr. Webster, in the very dawn of this wretched system, "as far as I know, there is no civilized country on earth in which, on a change of rulers, there is such an inquisition for spoils as we have witnessed in this free republic." "Sir," echoed Henry Clay, "it is a detestable system. And if it were to be perpetuated," said the silver-tongue of the West, the prophetic eye above it foreseeing our degradation, "if it were to be perpetuated; if the offices, honors and dignities of the people were to put up to the scramble, and to be decided by the results of every presidential election, our government and our institutions, becoming intolerable, would finally end in a despotism as inexorable as that of Constantinople."

But not only, as you see, does this system wither the patriotic pride and public spirit of the citizen, which are the springs of real greatness in a republic; not only does it tend to make the office-holder a sycophant or a bully, and the government one of mere professional politicians and not one of the people; but it promotes the utmost waste and extravagance in the service itself — an extravagance and loss resulting strictly from the system itself. When minor places are regarded, not as public trusts, but as party rewards, there will be a constant multiplication of places to supply rewards, and the influence which has created the place as a reward will be very slow to see dishonesty or inefficiency in the person rewarded. Why, as I am making a speech for civil service reform, I call General Butler to the stand — General Butler, one of the most bitter opponents of this reform — the gentleman who, in his late appeal to the people of Massachusetts, asks them to make him their governor, in the interests of

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economy, of purity, of all the cardinal virtues. And this gentleman, in his appeal to the people of Massachusetts, says these words — I call him to this platform as State's evidence — "With a swarm of hungry office-seekers surrounding the executive party, it is impossible to abolish needless offices, or to stop leaks in the treasury from which hungry politicians are fed. The temptation will be, on the other hand, to create new offices, to make new leaks, to satisfy those who claim that they have a right to be rewarded for their political labors." A Daniel come to judgment! And the Daniel speaks truly when he speaks. But the truth was noted long before General Butler was known. The number of persons employed by this government in the first year of the administration of John Quincy Adams, was somewhat more than 55,000; in 1833, eight years later, at the close of Jackson's first term, it was somewhat more than 100,000. But, including the increase of patronage from the great public domain thrown into the market, it had more than doubled in eight years, while the increase in the population of the country at the same time did not exceed twenty-four *per cent.;* that is to say, when this system was first introduced into our politics the offices increased four times as fast as the population, while there is no reason whatever, but immense danger, in a proportional increase of patronage with that of the population. Or the same abuse may be studied in a single office, viz., that of the Bureau of Engraving and Printing in Washington. A committee of investigation, composed of the most skilful experts, yet of the same party as most of those employed in that office, found that before the time of the existing superintendent, or the superintendent who, two days before, had resigned, the force employed in some divisions of the bureau was, for several years, twice, and in others three times as large as was necessary. The committee also discovered that more than half the force employed in that office could be dispensed with; and they distinctly declared the causes of this extravagance to be reciprocal — a vicious circle of lavish appropriation and appointment by political influence. Or take one other glimpse. Three-fourths of the customs revenue of this government are paid at the New York custom-house. The late commission of investigation of the system practised there, found that the number of persons employed was 1036, and that the amount of the salaries paid to them was a little more than a million and a half of dollars. After a little inquiry, they recommended that one-fifth of the persons employed be dismissed,

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with a saving of a corresponding value in salaries alone. This great and unnecessary multiplication of offices and salaries is the inevitable result of this vicious system of appointments by the mere influence of those who can create places, control appointments, and make appropriations.

But the same system breeds a waste and a shiftlessness, by the constant change of officers, which cannot be over-estimated. The late collector at the port of New York states that under his three immediate predecessors, more than one-fourth of the persons employed were removed every year. The reports of various congressional committees state more in detail that, during the three years of one of these predecessors, out of the 903 officers employed he removed 830. Another of them made 338 removals in eighteen months, although there had been no change of party administration; and another made 510 removals in sixteen months. The late collector of the port says that under his three predecessors more than one-fourth of those employed were removed every year. This, you observe, was for all causes. Now, the terms of his three predecessors did not exceed six years altogether; in each of these years, therefore, more than 230 persons were removed in the New York custom-house alone, out of an aggregate force of about 1000. But so immense a percentage proves either that the officers were singularly inefficient or dishonest, and therefore all deserved removal; or that they were arbitrarily dismissed without regard to honesty or efficiency. In either case, the shame and folly and extravagance of the present system are exposed. And it is no reply to the exposure of such an abuse and its causes to say that, whatever the system may be, the revenues are collected with amazing cheapness. It is not true. But if it were, it is not an extraordinary stretch of credulity to believe that, if the revenue be collected cheaply under a system which is shown by reason and experience to breed wide waste and extravagance, it would be collected still more cheaply under a system in which no one is interested in multiplying offices, or in arbitrarily turning out officers. It is not true, however. Simply pausing to remark that our revenues are collected chiefly under this wasteful system, I note that the cost of collection of our total importation, is more than three times as great as in France, more than four times as great as in Germany, and nearly five times as great as in Great Britain. And the commission which makes this report found, further, that, while the cost of collecting our customs revenue was

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four times as large as in Germany, the loss in its collection—by which I understand the commission to mean the difference between the amount of customs due under the law and the amount actually collected—was probably twice as large as the net customs revenue of the German Empire.

Such, brethren, is the system of the civil service of the United States, based upon political and personal patronage. But the proposition, in the interest of national morality and economy, to reform a practice so wasteful, so morally debasing, is naturally greeted with a storm of hostility. "I have always observed," said an acute cynic, "that men who thrive upon public abuses are like rats in a cheese. Providence, they think, plainly designed it for their food and lodging, and to try to save the cheese is a kind of blasphemous flying in the face of Providence." A nation which has abolished such a system of slavery as ours, which has paid one-third of its enormous war debt within half a generation, might be supposed equal to the task of transacting its public business in a way that did not menace its public morality and its political freedom. But the suggestion even is derided as the impossible doctrine of Utopia, the politics of the moon. It is the impracticable theory of fanciful schoolmasters and decayed clergymen; it is the whim of those for whom heaven itself is not pure enough, who are too good for this world, if you judge them by their words, but whose virtue is only a bid, and who mean by reform good places for themselves and their retainers. So pitiful is the condition to which this moral cancer of our system has reduced the active, working politicians in this country that they seem to think that nobody can speak of public virtue but a hypocrite, or commend political honesty without being a knave. Patience, patience! If sneers were arguments, the world would have been wind-bound long ago. When Columbus proposed to make the egg stand on end, the patronizing philosophers sneered that only a fool would try to do that. When he did it, they were the first to shout—"Any fool could do that!" The man who, in pursuit of a sound principle of reform, is afraid of the thing to be reformed, is himself not fit to be an American.

Well, it is alleged that our system is peculiar, and, in the best sense, American; that it is demanded and justified by the genius of American institutions; that to appoint to the minor offices upon proved fitness is to introduce monarchical practices, and to retain upon

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proved efficiency is to establish a bureaucratic aristocracy. I venture to say that nothing is more un-American than the present practice. Under the system of patronage as now administered, the public service is the monopoly of a few men of the dominant party in every State. It is, practically, a despotic oligarchy. It maintains party organization by the use of the public money, and in a country where government by party is inevitable, it gives the initiative of party action to the paid stipendiaries of the State. The reform that would destroy this abuse is emphatically — if I may restore a hackneyed phrase to its true meaning — the people's reform. It cannot come down from an executive, however well disposed; it must come up, whence every great movement in America comes up, from the convictions of the people. It aims to restore the public service to all the people. It asserts the essentially American doctrine that the public offices are public trusts, not personal perquisites. "It is necessary," if I may use Mr. Webster's words again, "to bring back public officers to the conviction that they belong to the country, and not to any administration, nor to any one man." This is the American doctrine; and Mr. Calhoun echoed the words of Webster: "Let us not deceive ourselves. The very essence of a free government consists in considering offices as public trusts bestowed for the good of the country, and not for the benefit of an individual or a party." The system of political morals which regards offices in a different light, viz., as public prizes to be won by competents most skilled in all the arts of corruption and of political tactics, and to be used and enjoyed as their proper spoils, strikes a fatal blow at the very vitals of free institutions.

This is the strophe and the antistrophe. This is the American doctrine, and upon this the friends of civil service reform plant themselves and demand that the public business shall be done upon business principles; that the vast multitude of places in the public service which are merely administrative and clerical, and in no sense political, shall be filled solely upon considerations of fitness, ascertained in a definite and reasonable manner, free from partisan or political influence; and that the tenure shall be faithful, efficient and economical discharge of duty. "This," in the words of Mr. Clay, speaking for another measure, "this is the true American system. It opens the doors of the service wide to the whole community; it emancipates its members from a degrading slavery; it removes from the

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service every stigma, and it would do more than any single measure to strengthen the weakest part of our national system, the peril of a periodical change of the executive power; while it would imply a patriotism and a revival of national morality that would justify the whole of America to our hearts and our hopes."

To this principle I know of but one serious objection, and to that, in conclusion, I wish to attract your attention. It is an objection, I do not doubt, which is felt by many in this church. It is an objection which comes to me personally from men in all parts of the country, whom I know, and of whose patrotism I am as sure as I hope I am of my own. I will state the argument as fairly as I can; and yet it is only a graver form of the belief that the system now practised is especially American. It holds that in a popular representative system like ours, government can be carried on only by party, and that to efficient party action the most complete and thorough organization is indispensable. But men in general — so the argument runs — do not act from high patriotic motives. We cannot expect that every citizen will be a Washington or a Leonidas; and a proper party organization that will ensure a thorough canvass of the voters, and bring out — to use the slang of the polls — "the last vote," cannot be maintained without a system of rewards. As the great leaders of the party, says this argument, are stimulated by the hope of the great places, so the little workmen in the caucus and at the polls must be stimulated by the hope of the little places. You must supply a motive of self-interest, and this is the obvious motive. Besides, it is urged, this system is as old as party government. It always was so; it always will be so. The supposition that the political practices of our fathers were any purer than our own is absurd. They used patronage and place for party and personal ends just as their sons do. Our fathers seventy years ago, says the argument, agreed with their fathers in England seventy years before, when, in the slimy court of George I., Lord Harley said that the strength of all governments, like the foundations of all religion, was rewards and punishments; and that the former were as necessary to encourage one's friends and keep them firm as the latter to intimidate one's enemies and keep them quiet.

In dealing — very briefly — with this argument, let us look first at its specious and false assumptions. It declares that if the great party leaders may properly aspire to great places, smaller workers may

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justly ask for smaller places. The false assumption here is not seen by every one. It is that every place in the service is, in its degree, necessary to the carrying out of the policy of the party, and that in the political change of the administration the people fail to accomplish their will unless there is a clean sweep. But reform of the civil service — I beg your attention to it — carefully distinguishes between places that are political and those that are not; between positions which are essential to carrying out a policy of government, and which are therefore the legitimate objects of political ambition, and those which are merely subordinate and clerical, and which are therefore no more objects of political ambition than the post of bookkeeper in a wholesale grocery is an object of political ambition. What is the legitimate sphere of party action? Parties divide upon questions of national policy. In a free country they appeal by public speech and in the public press to the judgment of the people. An opportunity is sought for the enforcement of a policy for the common welfare. But they can succeed only by legislation. Consequently each party strives to elect to the various legislatures representatives who will put its policy into law, and to commit the chief executive offices, with responsible advisers and representatives, into friendly hands. This is the legitimate scope of party action. Here is the spur to the noble ambition of rising hope — in an appeal to the intelligence of the people for opportunity to mould a State's decrees. In a free country, political ambition is the ambition to govern, to gather a party, as James Otis and Patrick Henry and Samuel Adams gathered the party that made the colonies independent; as Richard Cobden and John Bright formed and led the party that repealed the corn-laws; not by the bribery of place, but by reliance upon popular intelligence, by the force of a common conviction, by the inspiration of a common enthusiasm, by resistless argument and burning appeal. When the victory is won, such men are naturally placed where they can make that common conviction law. This, I say, is the honorable impulse of great leaders to seek great places. But this is not bribery and patronage. This is not making a good blacksmith a bad appraiser of muslins be cause he brought up bullies enough to carry a ward-meeting; and to argue that he ought to have his place in the customs upon the same principles that the leader has his in the cabinet, is to insult the common sense of the country. Well, it is retorted that this view is altogether too high and fine for human nature, that if the blacksmith

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had not brought the voters to the polls the good cause would not have triumphed, and that except for the expectation of the reward he would not have brought them up. Very well, then, by the argument he would have brought them up on neither side; and that is merely to say that the people have not interest enough in the laws to go to vote, and to say that is to abandon the principle of American popular government. To this comes the final answer, the answer which is to-day in this country the most serious obstruction to the reform of the civil service. "Reason as logically as you will," it is said, "the fact remains, that this is, and always has been, the practice in all countries governed by party." I deny it directly. The two chief countries of this kind are England and America. For England, let her greatest living statesman, Mr. Gladstone, speak—a statesman whose political career will be conspicuous in the history of his country for its daring moral tone, and for resolutely opposing to the glamour of imperial aggrandizement and false national pride the sturdy conscience of Old England. He has just spoken to us—to his kindred beyond the sea—and he says that the thing which perhaps chiefly puzzles the inhabitants of the old country to understand is, why the American people should permit their entire existence to be continually disturbed by the presidential election, and, still more, why they should raise to its maximum intensity all this perturbation by providing for what is termed a clean sweep in their civil service, in all its ranks and departments, at every election of a chief magistrate. "We do not see," he says, "why this arrangement is more rational than would be a corresponding usage in this country on each change of ministry. Our practice is as different as possible. We limit to a few scores of persons the removals and appointments on these occasions, although our ministers seem to us not infrequently to be more sharply severed from one another in principle and tendency than are the successive presidents of the great union." Mr. Gladstone speaks for England; and to the word of the late prime minister we can add nothing. As for this country, I appeal to history. The principle that the subordinate places, which are the bulk of the places in the civil service, should be held by political tenure, as a means of thorough party organization, was not held, nor put into practice, through all our early history. I cite you one great example. The first great party change of administration was the election of Jefferson. Party-spirit was never more bitter and intense. It was for some time doubtful whether the

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contest in the House of Representatives would not end in civil war Jefferson and his friends declared distinctly that if the plan which was proposed, of putting the government into a kind of commission were carried out, the Middle States would arm, and no such usurpation would be tolerated for a single day. The baleful fires of party-spirit that we saw dangerously flaming in the winter of 1876, were quite as lurid in the winter of 1800. Well, the party of which Jefferson was the chief without a rival, was as much distrusted and hated by the federalists as Robespierre and the French *sansculottes* were abhorred by the English tories. But in less than ten years this great party had risen over the party of the revolution, and was now thoroughly organized, enthusiastic and triumphant, not only without the power to assess and discipline its workers, but without the promise and expectation of a clean sweep of officers if they came into power. When Jefferson became President there were fewer places in the blue-book of the United States than there are now in that of the New York custom-house alone. In the moment in which I speak to you there is in every 150 voters of the State of New York one national office-holder; but there were not then officers enough to form any considerable element in the calculation. Madison and Gallatin, the other Jeffersonian leaders, naturally and properly expected that if their party should succeed they would be called to aid in shaping the general policy of the administration; but there was no expectation that, as a matter of course and as a condition of party government, all the national office-holders would be put out, and sound, hard-working Jeffersonians put in; and even Mr. Randall, the biographer of Jefferson, and an advocate of the Jeffersonian system, "provided," as he amusingly says, "it is kept within bounds"—which is as wise as to provide that an explosion of gunpowder should be kept within the keg—expressly admits that there was a general feeling that the offices were held on a good-behavior tenure. And Mr. Calhoun, in his report on the extent of the executive patronage, distinctly speaks of removals from office on party grounds as of recent date, and says that the cases of such removals, in the early stages of the government, were so few and of such little influence that they did not constitute a practice. Mr. Webster, in his great speech at Worcester, in 1835, said that political proscription leads necessarily to the filling of offices with incompetent persons and to consequent mal-execution of official duties; and when Mr. Webster announced to the Senate that Major

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Melville, one of Samuel Adams's tea party, was one of the first victims on whom the hand of the "reforming" president of that time had fallen, he said that the Senate was struck with horror. These are contemporary witnesses and authorities which no American, of any party or of any section, can challenge or question. Their testimony is unanimous and incontestible. What becomes, then, of the assertion that the practice of regarding the minor places in the civil service as the spoils of office is as old as government, and an essential condition of party success? Was not the Jeffersonian party efficiently organized? Was not the Jeffersonian administration efficiently organized? And yet, when his second election was pending, Jefferson distinctly refused to make the civil service a political machine. He curbed the eager partisanship of office-holders of his own appointment, and he wrote to Mr. Gallatin, Secretary of the Treasury, antedating the civil service order of President Harrison and that of President Hayes: "I think the officers of the federal government are meddling too much with public elections. Will it be best to admonish them privately or by proclamation?" The federalists fought with the rage of despair, but Jefferson was re-elected, receiving 162 electoral votes against 146 for his opponent. It was a presidential election fiercely contested, but triumphantly carried by the administration party, without the machinery of patronage and with a warning to the national office-holders to hold hands off. It is a conclusive answer to the universal assertion that in this country official patronage is indispensable to efficient party organization, and that the monstrous abuse of our day is a practice coeval with the government. The fathers, as we reverently call them, were not, as I know, saints in politics. They could hate or malign an opponent as bitterly and as brutally as their children. "The Aurora" reviled Washington with a ribaldry compared with which the abuse of a modern president is tame; and Timothy Pickering can be described often only as a blackguard when he speaks of Jefferson. Corruption, intrigue, meanness of every degree —these are not new. The sycophant is not a modern figure. Fawning, flattery, and solicitation of the dispensers of power, constantly meet the eye of the student of our earlier politics. But all these things show—for I am not saying that these men were, in any sense, reformers as we are—these things show how modern is this practice of inquisition for spoils, which is asserted to be an integral part of our system. Our fathers—heaven rest their strong and sturdy mem-

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ories! — our fathers — it is well in our hot day to recall their example — may not have been saints, but we know them to have been heroes. They had our passions and our prejudices. They heard the clamor that we hear; they heard it, doubtless, in their own breasts, as well as from the mouths of others. There were "great goers" in their day, too, who demanded the spoils as greedily as Swartwout and his crew. The difference is — and it is all that I assert — the difference is that the fathers victoriously resisted Swartwout, while the sons have ignominiously surrendered to him. The bugle of reform calls us to renew the battle that we have lost, and to conquer once more with the faith and the courage of the fathers.

Mr. President, you will think that I have strayed far from the domain of your deliberations, and have given you a speech instead of a sermon. But, children as we all are of men who founded a State on the moral law, and resolved as we are, that it shall not swerve from that eternal foundation, holding that in the moral order of the universe the right is always the politic, and pledged by our patriotic hearts to keep unstained the high ideal of our America, I appeal to you, fathers and brethren, whether the moral purification of our public life is not a work of vital christianity, and whether a wise and reasonable reform of the civil service would not tend to unite more closely American morals and American politics.

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REPORTS OF LOCAL CONFERENCES.

WESTERN UNITARIAN CONFERENCE.

SECRETARY — REV. JENKIN Ll. JONES, OF JANESVILLE, WIS.

THE FIELD.

This report, covering the field from Buffalo, N. Y., to San Francisco, Cal., should represent some fifty-six religious societies organized for regular church work, besides some twenty clubs, committees, or local associations of other names organized for missionary purposes, and looking toward the establishment of churches; fifty-four church buildings; forty-seven settled pastors. We have but four vacant pulpits actively in search of occupants, and these have fair prospects of having their hunger filled. We have but two or three available ministers in the west unsettled. Four local Conferences, one general Conference, one Sunday School Society, *Unity*,—a modest semi-monthly organ of liberal thought,—two colleges, and a theological school complete the list for which I am to speak.

LOCAL CONFERENCES.

It is our settled policy to organize our local Conferences within State lines. Wisconsin, Michigan, Illinois, and Iowa, are thus effectually organized; and on our return next week we hope to organize Indiana.

WISCONSIN CONFERENCE OF UNITARIAN AND INDEPENDENT CHURCHES,

organized in 1866, was the first local Conference organized under the recommendation of this body. It holds regular tri-annual sessions two and three days in duration. It now represents twelve societies, six church buildings and six ministers. The six different sessions

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held since my last report have been attended by delegates from thirty different places, the average being sixty a session, the highest number one hundred and seventy-five. To this Conference belongs the credit of inaugurating Unitarian grove meetings, which it has successfully held each summer for the last six years.

MICHIGAN CONFERENCE OF UNITARIAN AND OTHER CHRISTIAN CHURCHES.

This holds semi-annual sessions. Has five church buildings, seven societies, and six settled ministers, with a prospect of the seventh soon to take up the work dropped by the vigorous hand of Prof. Brigham at Ann Arbor. Then every society in the State will be led by tried and loyal soldiers of truth and freedom.

ILLINOIS FRATERNITY OF LIBERAL RELIGIOUS SOCIETIES.

Nineteen organizations, sixteen churches, twelve settled pastors; but one available pulpit in the State vacant. This Conference holds semi-annual sessions, is three years old, and growing, as it should with such a fellowship of ministers, as good and strong as have ever been gathered into a fraternity.

THE IOWA UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION

held its first annual session last June, at which the report of its missionary, Brother Effinger, showed that during the year it had grown from two active ministers to four, and two active societies to seven or eight. In what seemed to be a most barren field and the hardest of times, $1,886 have been raised for missionary work, every dollar of it within the State; $361 by memberships and contributions through the Iowa Association's treasury; the remainder through the exertions of the missionary, who travelled five thousand two hundred miles, preached and lectured one hundred and eight times, organized provisionally at Atlantic and Ottumwa, and permanently at Marshalltown, where a man is called for, and Des Moines, the capital of the State, where the annual meeting was held, and where Unitarianism, as taught and exemplified by Brother Effinger and his family, is already a recognized power. In July a supplementary two days' con-

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ference was held by this Association at Strawberry Point, where S. W. Sample, following up the missionary labors of Rev. Mr. Sunderland, of Chicago, and others, has broken hopeful ground, and at Elkader, a county seat, fifteen miles away.

OHIO VALLEY CONFERENCE.

As before intimated, this Conference is about to give up its life for the more tangible and inspiriting organization of States. Indiana, with its five church buildings and societies, and at present its two resident pastors, will organize next week at Hobart, where we hope the brave little band there will find their church out of debt, and they ready to settle the man of their choice, who with the coming man at Indianapolis, together with Brother Heywood and his hosts at Louisville, which now, as in war time, must be provisionally attached to Indiana, will form an efficient battalion of sappers and miners, who will ditch and drain the spiritual swamps of Indiana, that the fogs of bigotry and the chills of Calvinism may vanish with her malaria and her ague. Ohio, one of the greatest among our Western sisterhood of States, with only three churches—Toledo, Cincinnati, and Marietta, —and their hard-worked ministers, and Antioch College waiting to see whether the future hath need of it, constitute the working force of Unitarianism in that State. Perhaps in the past the Unitarians of Ohio have been too much given to looking East or West for their fellowship, rather than among themselves. A State Conference holding two or three sessions a year, utilizing as far as possible home talent, piecing out as we do in Wisconsin with borrowed material from over the border, would do much towards developing a fraternal interest among the liberal spirits of Ohio. The same is true of Pennsylvania, in which State we can claim two societies only.

MISSOURI VALLEY.

Brothers Snyder and Learned, with the Unitarians of St. Louis, have a natural, if not a justifiable, longing to belong to Illinois and the still farther East, rather than to Missouri and the still farther West. This makes of the Missouri Valley pre-eminent in our fellowship a one-man Conference.

Brother Copeland, of Lincoln, Neb., is Unitarian ranchman for all

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of Nebraska and Kansas, with an occasional glance towards the lone sheep of western Missouri, Council Bluffs, and Colorado. During the last year he has spoken once a month at Lincoln, once at Hastings, twice a month at Omaha, part of the year; and at Fremont, fifty miles farther west, on the Sunday evenings; he speaks at Omaha in the mornings. Besides this he has had occasional week-night appointments at Fairbury, Beatrice, Palmyra, Plattsmouth; and once a year or so visits our friends at Topeka, Emporia, Fort Scott, and other places in Kansas, North Platte, Denver, and Colorado Springs in the farther West. All this work he has done with the inadequate support which the work itself has yielded, removed from both the fellowship and the counsel of his brethren. At a distance it is easy to discover the crudeness that necessarily attends such a work, and at that distance the temptation to criticise is great; but a nearer view inevitably warms our hearts towards any one who, in this nineteenth century, is willing to enact the ever ancient and ever honorable roll of him who goes before, — the voice that cries, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God." To visit that field as I did three years ago, and receive grateful testimony of hearts that have been comforted, and souls that have been fed by this itinerant word, puts new meaning into the rustic theology of John Hay, and admiration for the angels that are willing to save even "Little Breeches." He who, on the cold, bleak prairies of Nebraska, is willing, in the name of the Lord, to "just scoop down" and "tote" any homesick child to where it is safe and warm, bringing him to his own Father's arms in trust and confidence, is in "better business than loafin' around the (Unitarian) throne" telling the secretary how not to do it.

THE PACIFIC SLOPE

of the farthest West it is for me to speak of in the absence of one better qualified. A true perspective would give to this section a separate report before this Conference, representing as it does so large a part of the territory of the National Conference, its eight active ministers, its four church buildings, and its monthly organ. To this field, more readily than to the Mississippi Valley, has the missionary money of the East gravitated the last two years. Whether this is owing to the superior ripeness of that field and the greater poverty of that section, or to the fact that the tops of the most distant mountains

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are the whitest, I am unable to judge. One thing is sure; ours are brave men who wear the epaulets on the Pacific Coast. They will lead their companies to no dress parade, but they are moving directly upon the enemies' works, and on "that line they will fight it out if it takes all summer."

WOMAN'S WORK.

At the Toledo Conference in May, 1877, the Western Conference appointed a committee, consisting of one woman from each of our principal fortresses, to see what could be done towards bringing the women of the West into more direct co-operation with the Conferences. This committee organized, held meetings, and carried on quite a correspondence among themselves, which indicated an unquestioned desire for work. At our last session in June the committee reported, asking to be represented on our executive board by an assistant secretary from their ranks, which was granted; and a model and parent society in Chicago organized and is in active co-operation, known as the Chicago Women's Liberal Religious Union. They have addressed a circular letter to their sisters far and near (the substance of which is published in the Sunday-school number of *Unity*, — on circulation in the back part of the room). They propose for themselves three lines of activity, viz., 1. Religious study and culture among themselves; 2. Practical Christianity; 3. Missionary work. The missionary work they have chiefly in mind I believe to be, — 1. The helping of needy ministers in the field; 2. Distribution of our publications; 3. Encouraging and aiding parties who are moved to enter the liberal ministry. Their zeal and the success already attending a few isolated bands of liberal women in the West, warrants the expectations that two years hence the women of the West will have something more tangible to report. Conspicuous among these bands is the club of women in Lawrence, Kansas, who for nearly two years have held regular meetings for the study of the Bible and kindred topics; have gathered the friends together socially, and kept things ship-shape around the veteran stone church, the first built in Kansas, built by Massachusetts money when Kansas was bleeding. Its bell rang the alarm of war when the ruffians were on the border; and it will chime out the gospel of peace to the splendid boys and girls who gallop in on horseback from miles around, each meaning to attend the State University. In concluding this review of local Conferences, present

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and prospective, I am moved to insist once more on their great missionary value. Numerous are those who date their interest in Unitarianism to some one of these meetings. Those of you who come from the East may wonder at the frequency of our meetings, the length of our sessions, and the density of our programmes; but herein lies the vitality of our local Conferences. Our ministers cannot afford to travel their sixty, one hundred, or one hundred and fifty miles two or three times a year, at their own expense (as is usually the case), merely for a holiday excursion. A large number of our delegates are those who have not the privileges of stated meetings. To these Conferences they look for spiritual quickening and intellectual stimulus that will carry them through to the next quarter, or it may be the next year. In the well filled programmes is found the way to utilize lay talent—men and women,—a check to aimless talking and vain disputations, and a summons to sober work, to earnest thought which always leads to the highest inspiration. Years ago we had in Chicago a local Conference organized for the obvious purpose of having a good time—one day session, few essays, plenty of time for stories and eating,—and it died for want of patronage. Then the Illinois Fraternity was organized for hard work, and each session has been more vigorous and populous than the preceding one. The local Conferences must summon us to business. They should be called together by the bugle as was one session of our summer meeting at Milwaukee last month. "Boots and saddles" is the call Unitarians need to hear.

THE WESTERN UNITARIAN SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY.

This little child of the West, now five years old, has contributed several tools to the tool chest of the liberal Sunday-school worker, among which have been schedules of lessons, illuminated cards for infant classes; and it has now in preparation a service book cheap enough to bring it within the range of our mission schools, and excellent enough, it is hoped, to make a valuable addition to the equipment of all our Sunday-schools. It holds annual sessions, and renders help to superintendents and teachers. Its revenue comes from annual and life membership. It has never been in debt, but could well use more money, and solicits a share of your interest and support. Any one wishing to do so can be enrolled as a member by applying to the secretary.

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"UNITY."

This "Pamphlet Mission for Freedom, Fellowship, and Character in Religion," a small fortnightly which you have all seen, published by a self-constituted committee of five, slightly backed by a few private individuals, has demonstrated thus far its right to exist and to a representation at this Conference by the work it has done in developing the latent interest in untilled fields, in feeding isolated friends who are beyond the reach of our voice, and in the general dissemination of the principles in the interest of which we are assembled. It has thus far paid its bills. It never expects to be a mendicant, content to live or die, if die it must — though it intends to live — on its own merits. But it would gladly avail itself of such individual co-operation as the members of this Conference may see fit to give it, either by way of subscription or in contribution to its reserve fund.

SCHOOLS.

How far denominational interference and support, even of so liberal a kind as that of the Unitarian, is helpful to institutions of general education, is still an open question, with the drift of sentiment against such patronage. The West sends two such suppliants to this Conference, — Antioch, resting her claims on her splendid record, Humboldt on its grand possibilities. The one well equipped and partially endowed, situated in the thickly settled districts of Ohio; the latter lifting its somewhat naked walls above the sparsely settled prairies of Western Iowa. In either case telescopic investigations are unsafe. That Antioch has done a grand work, all are agreed. That Humboldt *may* do a great work as a pioneer academy, in giving to that new country its first crop of intelligent and public-spirited citizens, training the teachers who are to preside over the district schools of that country for the next fifteen years, I am thoroughly convinced after studying the problem, on the ground as well as off of it. Waiving all the questions of the past, whether now with its new principal, Prof. Earthman — than whom Wisconsin had no more energetic or successful school-master and institute-worker to send, — a judicious investment of funds might not be made, seems to me a question altogether worthy candid consideration. But, however it may be with

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Antioch or Humboldt, the West clearly pleads for her school of the prophets, — Meadville, the modest but most deserving of all our suppliants. Neglect of Meadville by the National Conference is clearly killing the "goose that lays the golden egg." The friends may send money to dispel the darkness of Egypt; but Meadville sends Douthit. You give to the Association of your funds; Meadville furnishes it its secretary. You subscribe for the denominational literature; but Meadville edits it. For thirty-four years has Meadville sent its annual contribution in the way of living souls to speak the prophetic word we profess. The lips of all were not touched with living coals from the altar, but enough have kissed the living embers to make its endowment and protection an imperative duty upon us. Time and time again has its needy treasury stepped aside at our meetings that other more clamorous applicants might be attended to. Burnt Chicago, metropolitan Washington, have been heard and helped. When does Meadville's turn come? A small addition to its endowment, $15,000, is all they ask for; and indeed a few hundred dollars' contribution to its fund each year, would not only secure the most careful investment possible, but would also materially add to the strength of the faithful board of instructors.

THE WESTERN UNITARIAN CONFERENCE.

Lastly it is for me to speak a word of the Western Conference proper, whose field includes the territory and organizations already mentioned. It has held two annual sessions since our last meeting, characterized by hospitality and vigor. It has sustained a missionary secretary, who, during the last two years reported, has travelled annually about twelve thousand miles, visiting from forty to fifty different towns each year, averaging a hundred and forty missionary meetings, twelve conferences, and about seven hundred and fifty letters received annually. To this work he has given thirteen Sundays a year and a large proportion of week-day time and energy, for which service the Conference pays $900 annually and expenses, — the income of the Conference amounting to about $1,300. In addition to this, efficient missionary work has been done under the auspices of its secretary, by Rev. Mr. Pardee, in Wisconsin and Michigan; Messrs. Rowen and Kittredge, in Michigan; Mr. Sample, three months in Canton, O., and later at Strawberry Point and Elkader, Iowa; and

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Mr. Fisher at Alton, Ill. Rev. Mr. Sunderland has also rendered valuable missionary service at Evanston and Englewood, in Southern Chicago; and Rev. Mr. Herbert has maintained a vigorous missionary movement at St. Charles, Ill. I have the pleasure of introducing to this fellowship the new societies at Brodhead, Wis.; Charlotte, and Charlevoix, Mich.; Des Moines, Marshalltown, Strawberry Point, and Elkader, in Iowa; Yankton, Dakota; Santa Barbara, San Diego, Los Angeles, and perhaps others, on the Pacific Coast; and new churches have been dedicated at Evansville and La Porte, Ind. Alton has found strength, and is going on with a renovated church, and a new parson in a new parsonage. Baraboo, Wis., is quietly enlarging its building under lay administration. Buffalo and St. Louis are planning fine new churches. When completed, may they be void of the modern church fresco,—a mortgage. Our financial exhibit of last year's work, ending July 1, shows in money raised for missionary work in the West, including Western Conference, Local Conferences, Sunday School Society, "*Unity*," and particularly local missionary work, not including moneys raised on the Pacific Coast, or by Brother Copeland, of Nebraska, or for any local church charities, the American Unitarian Association, or the Washington church, over $5,145.

NEEDS OF THE WEST.

May I hint, in conclusion, at a few of the needs?

1. Our work has now assumed that proportion that it cannot be continued much longer without reduction, unless we can establish a central office, kept open by some one who is capable and willing to do the clerical drudgery attendant upon such work. There are tracts to be distributed, our publications to he exhibited, Sunday-school supplies to be forwarded, letters to be answered and filed. This work cannot be adequately attended to by secretaries attending to parishes and tramping about the country beside. The Western Conference Executive Committee have ventured to undertake the rent of such a room, provided the clerk's hire can be secured otherwise; and I hope this may soon be accomplished.

2. We need a small sum of money annually, entrusted to the hands of our secretaries, to be used in bearing the expenses of ministers on their long journeys to vacant parishes. I ask for no salary to such candidates; but no candidate, however zealous, can be expected to

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bear his own expenses to fields two, three, or four hundred miles away; while prostrate and discouraged societies are scarcely in spirit, if they are in pocket, prepared to make any guarantees. I feel confident that a small sum at my disposal for such purposes might have, in times past, secured happy settlements at different times; where without it it was impossible.

3. We need as a body still greater faith in the missionary *per se*,— a deeper realization of the truth Emerson states, that all institutions are but the lengthened shadows of some man. The kingdom of liberal thought cannot be organized by telegraph or postal cards. Paul was a good letter-writer; but he might have written letters until his head was gray and never have succeeded in starting them up at Ephesus or at Corinth had he not gone in person to work up these fields. So your secretaries may write letters from Chicago and Boston until the "crack of doom," and never start them up at Kansas City or Cleveland. The societies I report here to-day were all organized by MEN, who went with a missionary word on their lips and missionary work in their hearts, such as Conant, Codding, the Staples brothers, Hunting, and others. We want men like Brother Effinger, who, when he entered Des Moines fifteen months ago, and found all the signs inauspicious, all the liberal friends hopeless, yet had the "audacity to propose a Sunday service," the sequel of which I have hinted at above. The man at Ottumwa, who did not answer his letter because there was nothing to say that was hopeful, became his first deacon, to distribute his bills and ring his bells. A similar experience awaited him in Marshalltown. They assured him he was on a wild-goose chase; but they are now looking for a minister of their own. There is no substitute for the prophet yet invented; not even the telephone will quite fill the bill. We need to put a higher value on such service, — give it our first endorsement. When a young and inexperienced minister has gone the weary rounds of candidating, and has failed "to take" or "be taken" anywhere in New England, we are too prone to advise him to go West and try the missionary field. None but strong men can speed our mission, and strong men only should be sent forth. Not but what we should be thankful for the work done by the fairly endowed brethren who, by the aid of wealthy laymen, consecrated women, the example of illustrious predecessors, are enabled to do passable work in spite of their blunders in the pulpits of Boston, New York and Brooklyn; but we should rise in pro-

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found thankfulness to God for the grand equipments of such efficient souls as are able, single-handed and alone, without prestige or bank accounts, to become as the shadow of a great rock in a desert land to weary and thirsty souls,—such as Douthit, Effinger, Copeland.

4. We need to learn to be less economical with the Holy Ghost. Economy is good in human affairs, but there is enough of the Holy Spirit to go round. There is danger of carrying the New England grace of thrift a little too far when we undertake to eke out our truth for good fields only and prominent centres. The angel of truth shot his arrows hit or miss fashion; they glanced off the capitol dome at Springfield, but they stuck into the heart of Shelbyville, Geneseo, and Geneva, as well as Chicago. Likely as not the nice new church at Washington will fail to catch the big-headed statesmen it was erected for; while Brothers Sample and Effinger, out in Iowa, have one or two of them already on their string. The nicely painted and patented machine, with adjustable coils and double action-springs, though a fine trap, may fail to catch the quails which the boy will get into his rude figure 4, made of pieces of lath with a hatchet.

5. Out West we have been trying to work too much on the plan of Artemus Ward, who proposed to organize a regiment of brigadier-generals for the last war. We want privates as well as generals. The small places need looking after as well as the large places. It may be God has as much use for the former as the latter; at least, it happened so once down in Judea. The little roads of Nazareth did more for humanity than the metropolitan Jerusalem ever did. And it is well for us to remember that our own Drs. Walker, Hall, Norton, Lamson, Hill, the Peabodys, Noyes, the Wares, Theodore Parker, Hosmer, Livermore, Morison, and the Staples brothers, all came to their usefulness out of village homes and village churches. We must keep the springs upon the hillsides cleaned out if we are to have clear water in the river below.

6. Lastly, we still have need of greater faith in the vitality of our faith, trusting to the broadest fellowship and the strongest individuality possible. The experience of our Western organizations demonstrates that it is possible to trust the deepest religious earnestness and the aggressive faith of Unitarianism with unguarded doors. There never has been a time within the last three or four years but what it would have been possible for the Mormons or the Cumberland Presbyterians to have come in, packed our Conferences, and, under the

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suspension of the rules, committed us to polygamy, or fastened upon us all the decrees of Calvinism; but they have not done it. And we have, as I believe, a fellowship as clean, as energetic, and constructive as can be found in any of the well-guarded flocks. There is chemical affinity in spirit as in matter. There is a law of crystallization that is as absolute in matters of salvation as in saltpetre. In thus welcoming to our fellowship all those who desire to unite with us in advancing the kingdom of God, we offer you a large constituency,—not only these fifty churches, but the great unhoused and unharnessed mass of the West. Shall we feed them? A *pseudo* orthodoxy, a molluscous liberalism, preached over so-called evangelical pulpits, invites them; Spiritualism, with its telescopic eye-glasses, would fain feed them; Swedenborgianism, with its celestial technology, nourishes a few; Universalism, with its bright hope, strengthens its multitude; but still the great thousands are untouched, and will continue to be wanderers in a strange land until we go to them with our rational, vitalizing word, for a religion found in freedom, fellowship, and character.

Brethren, are we prepared to take possession of our own? If so, the centre of gravity of this National Conference falls somewhere in the neighborhood of the Mississippi River; and it is a law in physics that only things resting squarely on their base can stand. Our tower must not lean too far east. It behooves us to be vigilant, lest these Conferences become grand biennial picnics for Unitarian excursionists. At the risk of losing these luxuries of Saratoga, I urge the wisdom of carrying this Conference westward occasionally. I ask this not as a just claim of our Western laborers, who year after year must make this long and expensive journey eastward, or go without this goodly fellowship. This Conference in justice to itself should gradually gravitate towards its own. Let the geography widen our purposes, quicken our sense of responsibility and opportunity. Within the next quarter century we ought to hold a session of this National Conference on the Pacific Coast. Brethren, the day is coming when we shall need more heroic surrounding in order to lay the heroic plans we need. Think of Elijah and Isaiah putting up at the crack caravansaries in Jerusalem to lay plans for the extension of the religion of Jehovah among the Moabites and the Phœnicians!

Wesley gathered his elders together in barns; we in the resort of fashion. Luther cried, I go to Worms, though the houses be tiled

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with devils. The Unitarian says, I go to Saratoga, if I can get comfortable rooms on the ground-floor. This Conference will to-day probably pay a thousand dollars in waiters' fees and carriage hire; while the fire in the breast of our missionary in Iowa or Nebraska is being extinguished for want of $100 to pay his rent. Brethren, you sometimes think we out West are given to rhetorical inflation. There are some things, like the ocean, so great the strongest phrases do but mock them. Such, I take it, are the issues and demands which the West to-day lays at the feet of this Conference.

We hear often of the hopeless burnt fields of the West. I solemnly declare there are none such. As there are warm throbbing hearts to be found beneath the staid proprieties of the New England societies, that to the strange visitor seem so thoroughly frozen over, so God has still a wealth of vital germs beneath the ashes and cinders of our Western fires. Pittsburg, Cleveland, Springfield, Ill., Kansas City, Denver, and a hundred other fields, are ready for our plow-shares when we are ready to put them in. It behooves us to lay large plans and to make still larger investments of time, money, and consecration to execute them.

REPORT OF THE CONFERENCES IN THE MIDDLE STATES AND NEW YORK.

BY REV. S. H. CAMP.

The churches of the Middle and Southern States' Conference are widely scattered, and no session has been held for sixteen months; but the situation is by no means discouraging. Except at Northumberland and New Orleans, all societies have settled pastors; Mr. Browne holds on firmly at Charleston, and his people are bearing their burden bravely; young men have recently been settled at Wilmington and Vineland; Baltimore is still the field of Mr. Weld's acceptable service; Washington, with its new church, starts off on a fresh career of prosperity; Germantown rejoices in the rich ministry of Samuel Longfellow. Missionary work, continued two seasons, in North Philadelphia, proves that there is abundant material for a second

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society. As a whole, the weaker churches of this Conference are still receiving more money from the Unitarian Association than is contributed by the stronger ones. Mr. May's church in Philadelphia, though unattached to National or Local Conference, is generous in its response to all calls for direct assistance.

THE NEW YORK AND HUDSON RIVER CONFERENCE.

Since the last meeting at Saratoga there have been four meetings of this Conference. These meetings have been full of interest, but the attendance of ministers as well as people has not been what it ought. We are constantly embarrassed with the fact that we have much to do with very little financial strength. The territory all about us is valuable missionary soil, but we are not able to occupy. The church at Newark is in a state of suspended animation, and without positive assistance cannot survive, and yet few churches were ever started with more promising prospects than that.

The Conference has interested itself in Harlem, which is simply saying that All Souls Church of New York has as often before come to the relief at that important point.

We have no treasury of our own, and with one or two exceptions, our parishes seem to have no financial ability beyond their own necessities. Then, too, we are considerably scattered, but it still seems as if a deal more might be accomplished if we could have a wide-awake man as our agent or missionary, who could visit the churches, preach for those without pastors, and lay the claims of the Conference before the churches having ministers.

REPORT OF THE CONFERENCES IN NEW ENGLAND.

BY REV. N. P. GILMAN.

The Unitarian churches of New England are united in one State Association and eleven Conferences. These Conferences hold from one to four meetings a year. During the last two years the attend-

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ance at these assemblies has been uniformly large, increasing rather than diminishing. In the Worcester Conference the practice of beginning the meetings with an evening service has been followed, from its formation, with great success. Three of the Conferences have, by way of variety, a picnic gathering in the summer; and in New Hampshire there has appeared the portentous sign of a Unitarian camp-meeting. These Conferences are not simply ministers' meetings, though the laymen are too much disposed to let them become such. Subjects relating to theology, philosophy, and science, to practical organization, and to the religious life, are all discussed. In general, however, but little has been accomplished in the way of missionary effort within the last two years. It is suggested that each church should, as has been done lately in the South Middlesex Conference, choose two lay delegates, auxiliary to the Executive Committee, to make suggestions for Conference work and to stir up their respective societies; and, further, that in January preceding the biennial meetings of the National Conference there should be printed a detailed report by each secretary of the condition of all the churches.

Some younger societies have been severely tried, and some older parishes have declined through personal or local causes; but in the Conferences, as a whole, there has been a decided improvement upon the state of things two years ago. Church debts have been decreased in a number of places. Holyoke has a chapel, dedicated Oct. 4, 1876, and the work there is progressing fairly; the Berlin society holds its own with good courage; the Malden parish is building a church, which is soon to be occupied; the Tiverton memorial chapel holds regular service, and is out of debt, through the generosity of Mr. Thomas Whitridge; Vineyard Haven is well supported; new church buildings are going up in Brunswick, Me., in Milford, and in Lebanon, N. H. Among later enterprises, a new society has been legally organized in Athol, Mass., which has a good congregation and Sunday school, and hopes to have a church next year. The slumbering church in Hartford has come into full life, and the ministry-at-large in Providence is trying to become independent under the name of the Olney Street Congregational Society. At Brookline, there is an opening with many advantages and some disadvantages; at North Woburn there is a chapel expecting a Unitarian ministry in time; in Saxonville a regular Sunday afternoon congregation is drawn out; and at Newton Centre is a promistng new society, now in the charge

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of Rev. Dr. Stebbins. The missionary activity in Maine has been intermitted. The Union for Church Work and Help, formed last winter by the women of the four Unitarian churches in Salem, raised some seven hundred dollars, and distributed that sum to needy societies. In the South Middlesex Conference and on the Connecticut River the experiment of "public religious meetings," as they are called, has been tried, and its projectors hope to continue the work this coming winter.

The report concluded with a resolution recommending the American Unitarian Association to prepare a book of religious songs adapted to popular use.

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REPORT OF SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY.

BY REV. GEO. F. PIPER, SECRETARY.

During the last two years the Unitarian Sunday School Society has carried on with a good degree of success its accustomed work. It has continued to publish the "Dayspring," Sunday School Manuals, and Sunday School Lessons; to send its publications gratuitously to Sunday Schools in want of but too poor to pay for them, and to be the centre of Sunday School supplies for the Unitarian denomination.

Every department of its work is in as healthy a condition as at any previous time. There has been no diminution in our sales, our subscription lists, or our missionary work, and our receipts, including donations, have been sufficient to meet our expenses. The most encouraging feature of our work is the success which has attended the publication of the Sunday School Lessons. Their circulation has largely increased, and it is believed that the interest they have awakened, and the good they have done, has increased in proportion.

For a year past these lessons have been devoted to the Old Testament. A series of forty-three Lessons—about the number needed by most of our schools for a year's study—has been completed, and can now be had in a handsome volume of one hundred and twenty closely printed pages.

This series covers the period from Abraham to Solomon, and is selling at an unexpectedly rapid rate. Another series on the Old Testament is now being published in monthly parts and will be finished in May next, when it will be offered in a bound volume like the preceding one. It is probable that these two series on the Old Testament will be followed by two similar ones on the New—the whole forming a four years' course of Biblical study.

The Lessons are based on the theory that the Sunday School should aim first, to impart knowledge of the Bible, its history, geography, and antiquities, the origin, contents, and purpose of its books—knowledge corresponding to that which our children get in the day schools about other matters, but which, for obvious reasons, these

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schools cannot give; and secondly, to help quicken in each child the moral and spiritual life. They assume that the Sunday School should teach religion and teach about religion.

They are also based on the "One Lesson System," that is to say, an attempt is made to adapt each lesson to all the members of the school except the infant class. It is evident that this system has its disadvantages, yet when it is considered that it is the one which enables teachers' meetings, general lessons and reviews to be conducted to the best purpose, that it is the one which enables every teacher and pupil to know what the lesson for the day is to be, there hardly can be a doubt that it is the system, which, on the whole, is to be preferred to any other.

Although the Society is doing a useful work, and gaining wider and deeper influence, there is opportunity for it to do much more for the denomination, and for the Christian cause, whenever it shall have donations to a sufficient amount to enable it to enlarge its sphere of activity. If it could expend on the "Dayspring" a thousand dollars per annum more than at present, it could improve that publication more than one hundred per cent. There is great need that one or more persons, qualified for the task, should be engaged at once to prepare Lessons on the Life of Jesus, to be published next year.

During the last ten years this Society has received, on an average, only about twenty-five hundred dollars a year in donations. It needs to receive double that amount to make it as efficient as it ought to be. With contributions to the amount of five thousand dollars annually, it could pay reasonable salaries, do all the missionary work that would come within its province, and make the "Dayspring" doubly as attractive and useful as now, and publish the best Sunday School Lessons that the experience, learning and piety of the denomination could produce.

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REPORT OF THE BUREAU OF MINISTERIAL SUPPLY.

BY REV. E. C. GUILD, CHAIRMAN.

The Bureau of Supply was organized by the Ministerial Union as a means of communication between parishes and unsettled ministers. It consists of a committee of three settled ministers acting in conjunction with Mr. Geo. W. Fox, Assistant Secretary of the American Unitarian Association. On the departure of Prof. Everett for Europe we were fortunate in securing the co-operation of Rev. Rufus Ellis. It was originally intended to aid candidates in finding parishes and to relieve them of the necessity of addressing themselves directly to parish committees. The custom of soliciting a hearing from the parishes seemed to all parties a very awkward and embarrassing one—to some it seemed even an unmanly and unprofessional act. It was therefore in the hope of removing a serious difficulty in the way of young ministers that the work of this Bureau was undertaken.

But it soon became evident that nothing could be done in behalf of candidates until we could get the confidence of the parishes, and make it apparent to their committees that we had advantages and facilities to offer them which they could not afford to neglect. Circulars were issued offering to give information concerning candidates, and recommending to the committees certain methods which we believed would be productive of good results to both candidates and parishes. The recommendations were:

1st. To hear no candidate without careful inquiry.

2d. To give each candidate three or four consecutive Sundays.

3d. To insist upon a vote of the parish after two or three carefully selected candidates have been heard.

We are convinced that the reiteration of these recommendations has been of service, although but little direct response has been made to us. The principles and methods we have advocated seem to have been pretty generally adopted. That this is the case is evidenced by the prompt settlement of the gentlemen who graduated at the Divinity

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School last June, every one of whom is now or shortly will be ordained and installed in regular congregational order. It is of very little consequence however whether the parish-committees consult the Bureau directly or not, so the principles we advocate may be adopted and acted upon. And we are very strongly of opinion that investigations pursued by parish-committees merely with the general advice and counsel of neighboring clergymen will not be thorough. The members of the parish-committees are men engaged in other pursuits—often they are among the busiest men in the community,—they are under a constant pressure from the members of the parish at large, demanding from them startling pulpit-novelties—they are beset with letters from persons desirous to preach in the pulpit they have in charge. Under these circumstances, if they happen to consult one of our older ministers, who is likely to be a man of great kindness of heart, and likely enough also to be quite unacquainted with the younger men in the ministry, and get from him a negatively favorable view of the candidate, if he says, for instance, that he has "heard nothing but good of him," they are very apt to be satisfied and rest there.

But it will be asked; why all this talk about investigation? What is there that needs to be so carefully inquired into? I answer: It is of the utmost importance that we should be assured of the moral character and religious purpose of the men whom we put into our pulpits. Our churches will stand or fall as the personal character of the men who fill our pulpits is sound and high, and their religious feeling strong and earnest, or otherwise. Of course this does not need to be said or dwelt upon in the vast majority of instances, in regard to our ministers as a body. But even a single exception does incalculable damage to the cause of pure religion. I would urge, therefore, that inquiry should be made diligently in regard to all persons not well known among us. First, in regard to honesty, temperance, and purity of life; and second, in regard to the seriousness and devoutness of religious purpose. Instances are known to us of men of dishonest character, intemperate habits, and impure life, who have been settled over our parishes simply because the parish committee would not take the trouble to make due inquiry, or were for some reason unwilling to avail themselves of the opportunity offered for obtaining information. Other instances have occurred in which our parishes have made engagements with men who had no settled religious convictions whatever, no principles of faith for a foundation on

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which to upbuild character and life. However far from the spirit of our denomination it may be to make any inquisition into one another's opinions, however eager we may be to respect one another's individuality, we surely do not want men in our pulpits who have not any settled opinions at all. If we put into the pulpit men who have cut away from all moorings and are simply drifting, the first effect they will have upon a parish will be to set every one else afloat like themselves. And in the instances above referred to, where settlements were effected without due care, the result has been that after a few months of disgraceful struggle and conflict, the hastily formed connection has been dissolved

Especially is it needful that proper persons should be appointed to take due cognizance of accessions to the ranks of our Ministry coming from other denominations. This is a range of inquiry which parish-committees would find it peculiarly difficult to make. At present there is no way by which any one not a graduate of our Theological Schools can enter our fellowship formally until he is settled over a parish. This was strikingly instanced not long ago in the case of a gentleman brought up in the Unitarian faith who became a preacher late in life, not having passed through the schools of Theology. He applied to a Local Association for recognition and was referred to the Ministerial Union. He then applied to the Union and was referred to the Local Associations. Honored and trusted and welcomed by all who knew him, he yet found no body of ministers or committee of fellowship duly authorized to receive and approve his claims to the ministerial office. Men coming to us from other denominations would be glad to find a Committee empowered to offer them a welcome and an endorsement.

The small direct result of our efforts during the past two years, seems to show that the endorsement of the National Conference, given us at its last session, is not enough to draw general attention and give wide influence to this Bureau. It may therefore be best that the Conference should itself establish a committee, including a suitable proportion of laymen—having a national scope, and adequate authority.

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REPORT OF THE AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION.

BY REV. RUSH R. SHIPPEN, SECRETARY.

The Board of Directors of the American Unitarian Association welcomes this opportunity to report, through its Secretary, to the Unitarian Churches and people here represented, the opportunity and demands of missionary work in the service of our faith that invite and summon us to a larger generosity and more consecrated zeal.

The Association and the Conference are substantially the same people, in different organization and capacity. The officers and the members of the two bodies have always been largely the same persons; and the interests and purposes so largely the same that rivalry, jealousy, or antagonism, of one body toward the other, would be manifestly absurd, and invasion by either of the other's province would bring mutual destruction.

This Conference—without continuous corporate existence, composed of delegates changing from year to year, representing a multitude of benevolent institutions, many churches that are beneficiaries and not contributors, and many churches jealous of their independency, not limiting its invitation even to the Unitarian fellowship, but welcoming all who choose to come,—is but a biennial mass meeting of the liberal brotherhood, manifestly not organized for executive functions. Neither the body nor its members are prepared to raise money, to pledge it, or to administer it. Its successful existence largely depends upon holding aloof from all direct pecuniary responsibilities and entanglements. It best fulfils its own high and valuable functions as purely a conference: free to discuss the interests of our cause; to express the mind of the household of our faith; to utter the general sense of the meeting; to inspire, to stimulate, to energize, and in general way to indicate the work it believes in; strictly conforming to the purpose declared in the second and seventh articles of its constitution, "to the end of energizing, and stimulating the denomination with which it is connected, to the largest exertions in the cause of Christian faith and

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work," "adopting the existing organizations of the Unitarian body as the instruments of its power, and confining itself to recommending them to such undertakings and methods as it judges to be in the heart of the Unitarian denomination."

The American Unitarian Association, on the other hand, permanently organized and legally incorporated, capable of receiving, holding, and administering trusts, having its responsible officers, records, and accounts, recognizes in the churches and people who principally compose this Conference its patrons and constituents, whose generosity is the fountain and measure of its resources and strength, whose guiding advice it welcomes in its varied activity, and whose acceptable servant in its own special sphere of missionary work it aspires to be. Happily, thus far the two bodies, Conference and Association, each keeping its own province, have co-existed, and worked together amicably and with mutual helpfulness.

This harmonious co-operation is happily illustrated in the building of the new church edifice in Washington, whose well-known completion we here rejoice to record. While our accustomed missionary work, as reported and approved two years since, has been prosperously continued, in addition thereto this important enterprise, so warmly commended to the churches by the last National Conference, has been carried to completion by the Association. The Conference, with its expression of public sentiment, gave to the enterprise the needed stimulus and endorsement; while, with no small labor and care, the officers of the Association, in all the financial details, followed it to its successful result. The Washington society contributed their proposed quota of $30,000. The trustees of the Winn Fund gave in behalf of the denomination $10,000; and Unitarian churches and individuals, through the hands of the Association, gave $22,000. The lot having cost $20,000, and the building, completely furnished, costing $45,000, left a deficit of $3,000, which the Association has supplied from its own funds. Upon the evening of dedication, January 29, 1878, the lot, edifice, and furniture, costing in all about $65,000, were thus completely paid for, with no debt remaining as a burden upon the property. The Association, however, greatly needs the repayment of its $3,000 advance, and hopes that the churches will make good this deficit in next year's contributions. The property is held in the name of the Washington society, as was deemed by us best under the principles of Congregationalism. It is covered, however,

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by a mortgage of $35,000, bearing no interest, held by the Association; under which the money can be reclaimed, should the edifice ever be diverted from the purpose for which it was built. With a minister chosen by themselves, and holding their confidence and affection, the Washington society has started upon a fresh career of prosperity; many accessions to its membership, and a largely increased congregation, giving a hearing to the pulpit already amply justifying our highest expectations. Under the lead of its minister, Rev. Clay MacCauley, the society, meanwhile, has been newly organized upon a distinctively Christian basis, seeking a more earnest church-life and fellowship in various activities, charitable, social, and religious. Recognizing the importance of this pulpit as a centre of wide missionary influence, and in accordance with the purpose of that denominational interest that helped to build the church, the Association, in co-operation with the Washington society and its pastor, proposes, during the session of Congress next winter, to invite some of the ablest representatives of our faith to present there a series of discourses upon Unitarian Affirmations. And for the expense thus involved, we ask the contributions of the churches.

Since the last Conference, the Association has also published a new and revised edition of "The Hymn, Tune, and Service-Book," which has been received with warm favor by many persons who have examined and churches that have adopted it. The Association's Hymn-Books have needed no missionary funds, but have been a source of income. We believe that no better manuals for congregational hymn and prayer exist in the language.

Looking forward, and not back, we ask the attention of the Conference to the principal lines of missionary work that to-day summon us. Since the formation of this Conference, thirteen and a half years ago, and the bountiful increase of missionary fund that accompanied it in 1865, a careful survey and study, year by year, of the whole field, has eliminated from our list some chimerical enterprises, and has opened certain well-defined channels of activity that approve themselves to a mature judgment. These should not be closed or abandoned, but only enlarged with a more consecrated zeal and generosity. We have no sensational experiments nor captivating novelties to propose, soon in their turn to be dropped and added to the old list of failures. Our virtue is subjected to the test of standing steadily by the good work already undertaken, which demands all the generosity

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we have thus far been able to command. Our missionary work has little of any new story to tell. It is becoming the old, old story. Yet methods of work are always open for fresh consideration, and we welcome the wisdom of the Conference in guiding our plans.

Shall we not steadily stand by our India Mission? It is in all the world the only mission of Christianity to heathendom that goes thither, not in antagonism, but in sympathy and appreciation,—that says not, "Your faith is false, your religion is to be trampled under foot," but says, "We are brothers, worshipping the same Father. Your religion is one utterance of the Holy Spirit; in the name of Jesus, we would show you a more excellent way." Orthodoxy has spent untold thousands to shatter idolatry; and, even where no single heathen has been converted, has commended itself as a divine generosity. It is little enough for all the wealth of the liberal church in America to keep open in Calcutta a channel by which the aspiring culture and religion of the Brahmo-Somaj may have access to the noble literature of the liberal faith, and the most enlightened and saintly Hindoos aided forward to the purer, loftier religion of the Sermon on the Mount.

Shall we not continue with unabated zeal our aid to feeble churches in New England? Although distant fields may seem more promising, the comparison is often illusive. Why is a church of a hundred people in a New England village less important than one of half the number in some great city? But we need no comparison. These small churches are the fountains of our influence. The young people they colonize are everywhere missionaries of liberal Christianity, and leaders in our best civilization. Our churches in San Francisco, Chicago, St. Louis, and New York, could not afford to lose the strength they have gained from the country churches of New England. They are the rills that feed the rivers that fill the sea. Close these churches and you largely dry up the best sources of the charity and morality, the educational and religious culture, that save the nation. Our list of beneficiary churches in New England does not diminish, but has increased rather, under the strain of recent financial pressure. In administering your bounty, we scrutinize as fairly as we can the merit and the need of every special call that comes. We invite the advice of the local conferences with which they are connected.

Shall we not maintain our faith in the similar work in more distant fields? Fifteen years ago great hopes were cherished of the speedy formation of many strong new churches. By the selection of the great

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cities, and the establishment of a church a year in each of them, it seemed easy, theoretically, soon to possess the continent. It is a sore trial of our faith that the churches at Harlem, at Indianapolis, at Cleveland, the Third and Fourth Churches at Chicago, at Omaha and Denver, at Charleston and New Orleans, after many a year, are still at our doors for aid, under the pressing alternative of continued life or speedy death. We must accept the obstacles and discouragements and still do our best. Wherever is formed a Unitarian church, East or West, there is found a band of men and women at the front of all the best activities of the community. Their influence is not to be estimated by counting numbers,—it should be weighed. Who shall reckon the contributions to the best life of the Mississippi Valley by our churches of St. Louis, Louisville, and Chicago. At the growing centres of the Pacific coast, and those of the new States beyond the Mississippi, as well as at nearer points, like Cleveland and Harlem, let us still patiently labor and wait. For expenditure in planting churches in these distant fields the Association asks your generosity. And, whether it is best to plant and sustain men in important centres, or to assign them circuits, or to send them widely travelling, is a question for consideration.

Especially inviting is the opportunity opened by the chief collegiate towns of the West. The day has gone when the Unitarian people need to found or to sustain colleges of their own. Science and letters are of no sect. The higher secular education is essentially liberal and liberalizing. During the first half of our century a multitude of small colleges have been founded by sectarian zeal. Though they have done their own good work, we need not now enter into that competition. At best, we have no constituency in the West to demand or sustain them. However unsectarian their management, people of other sects shun them as infidel. They are contrary to the spirit of the age, which demands institutions divorced from all denominational alliance. Meanwhile, under the munificent educational endowments given by Congress to all the new States, the West has no claim on the East for educational benefactions. By the published educational reports, Iowa to-day, with a population nearly equal to that of Massachusetts, is proportionally as rich in her educational income,* Every new State

	Massachusetts.	Iowa.
* Population	1,460,000	1,200,000
Educational Income	$6,105,536	$5,387,524

United States Report on Education, 1877.

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also is forming its own central University on unsectarian foundations, with ample income and equipment. These far outstrip all we can do. The hundreds of young men they bring together, without sectarian bias, are susceptible to the liberal influence we may fairly exert upon them. At Ithaca, N. Y., and Ann Arbor, Mich., for twelve years or more, such service has been rendered as no gold can compensate, by Dr. Stebbins and Mr. Brigham. For their fidelity we tender them the expression of profound gratitude. Their good work we hope to continue by the younger brethren, Rev. H. C. Badger and Rev. J. T. Sunderland. We have recently invited Rev. Oscar Clute to similar work at Iowa City, the seat of the Iowa State University, having five hundred students. We are aiding in starting a ministry at Brunswick, Maine, the seat of Bowdoin College, with its one hundred and fifty students. We are not unmindful of the opportunity opened at Exeter, N. H., the seat of Phillips Academy, and at Meadville, Pa., having not only the Theological school, but a college of two hundred and fifty students. Meanwhile, Madison, Wis., Lawrence, Kan., and Lincoln, Neb., each the seat of a rapidly-growing State University, only await the right man, and the funds to sustain him.

For all this work everything depends on the men. No central board can command success without the competent leaders. The Unitarian Association, like President Lincoln, severely criticised for delinquencies of chaplains sent to the army, is compelled to use just what material the profession furnishes. It is no fault of the Association that it cannot command angels as the apostles and prophets of the liberal gospel. Meanwhile it behooves us to foster the two schools of the prophets at Cambridge and Meadville, and to sustain, according to their need, the young men who are there fitting for the ministry. Year by year, the men they send out successfully recruit the pulpit leadership of the churches. At the same time, we are not unmindful of the fact that many of our ablest and best have been equipped in other communions. As the number increases who thus seek our household of faith, it has seemed that a committee of fellowship may well be appointed by this conference to accept their credentials, examine their record, and offer them welcome. And since human nature is not yet perfect, and notoriously some of our pulpits have been disgraced by false and unworthy men, who have fallen under shadow of failure or immorality in other communions, and, under the pretext of change of belief and a love of larger freedom, seek fresh chance

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in ours, it behooves our churches, while not unmindful of the apostolic injunction to entertain strangers,—for thereby some have entertained angels unawares,—to examine, by some trustworthy method, more carefully, the record, the character, and the fitness of these strangers who announce themselves angels of the liberal gospel.

And shall we not, above all else, spread more freely our religious literature? Notably, says Carlyle, "Do not books still accomplish miracles? They persuade men. * * * What built St. Paul's Cathedral? Look at the heart of the matter; it was that divine Hebrew Book. * * * The true University of these days is a collection of books. * * * Books are our Church, too." Of all the work of the twelve apostles, the most directly enduring result lives in their epistles. Even the churches founded by Paul have disappeared, while the letters Paul wrote have been preaching for eighteen centuries, and still live and speak in all climes and tongues throughout the world. It is true that, more than in any special missionary effort of ours, the strength of our cause in America is in the best men and women and the quiet home-work of our three hundred churches, and moves forward in the growing intelligence and a multitude of liberalizing influences of the age. It is equally true that in our noble literature is largely the hiding of our power. Our churches are few; gifted preachers are fewer, and the range of the living voice narrowly limited. But by the printed page the best words go to the ends of the land, and find audience of millions. Mr. Moody has gathered larger crowds to hear him than ever did Mr. Martineau. But when the crowd has scattered, and its thin excitement is forgotten, our princely spiritual leader will still be found winning the highest science and philosophy to reverently worship God in spirit and in truth. Of all the sects of Christendom, the Unitarian, with its word of life so richly uttered by gifted souls, living and dead, finds here its chief vantage ground, and may well choose these lists in which to challenge competition. With all the hindrances, obstacles, limitations, defects, perplexities and failures of our attempts at church extension on one hand; with the boundless opportunities offered by the increasing inquiry of the wide world, and the wealth of resources latent in the pages of our Wares, Peabodys, Channing, Dewey, and the rest, it is amazing that we so sluggishly allow the dust to cover our books. Were we half alive to the magnificent opportunity that summons, we

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should sow this seed broadcast, like campaign documents in a Presidential election.

A small, almost insignificant beginning, has been made by a few gifts to libraries, and the offer of Channing to ministers. It is mortifying to-day to confess that for lack of funds we have never dared advertise our offer openly, but have only ventured feebly to whisper it in private. Nevertheless, to our offer, hardly anywhere openly known, there comes every month such hearty and hospitable welcome, that it only hints and suggests the vast harvest field awaiting us.

Fifty thousand dollars could be thus spent to advantage before our next Conference meets. Public libraries and reading rooms forming all over the land, the natural complement of the public schools, becoming, as Carlyle has said, the real University and largely the pulpit of the American people, offer us hospitality. Let us freely send them these angels of the better life, of whose good record and character we are sure. There are 35,000 preachers in the United States every Sunday speaking to the American people. We cannot exchange or have access to their pulpits, but we can tell them what to say; and thus, through all the land, preach to all the people without any councils trying us for heresy. Into every public library and reading room, and to every minister and theological student in America willing to receive them, the churches and people of this Conference ought to send a liberal selection of the best Unitarian books. Give us the funds and it shall be done; and it will be a more living, enduring, and far-reaching work, than that so happily accomplished since our last biennial, of building the Washington church.

Since our last Conference, the contributions for our missionary work, including, as we fairly should, the gifts for the Washington church, need by no means discourage us. Estimated at their gold value, they show fairly by the side of the annual gifts of ten years ago. Yet, consider what a financial judgment-day all our churches and people have been passing through of closing and settling long open accounts, and let each pastor and delegate consider the case of his own particular church, and know it fairly stands for the average denomination, and no doubt or distrust shall chill the enthusiasm of this Conference. Rather shall we take new heart and hope, and with the rising tide of the freshly coming prosperity set sail anew.

The Association asks that the churches shall begin their yearly collection promptly upon the close of this Conference, and complete

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it as early as possible. And it asks that, for the next two years, there shall be sent us at least $50,000 per year, for a new crusade of liberal propagandism.

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RECORD OF BUSINESS.

SARATOGA, TUESDAY, SEPT. 17TH, 1878.

7.30 P. M. The eighth "National Conference of Unitarian and other Christian Churches" assembled in the Methodist Church. Sermon by Rev. Brooke Herford, of Chicago.

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 18TH.

9 o'clock. Conference meeting, conducted by Rev. Geo. W. Hosmer, of Newton, Mass.

10 o'clock. The Conference was called to order by the President, Hon. E. R. Hoar, of Concord, Mass., who spoke as follows:—

ADDRESS OF JUDGE HOAR.

Bretheren and sisters of our household of faith, whose familiar countenances are so pleasant to my eyes, I am happy that it is my privilege to greet you at the opening of this interesting occasion, held under such favorable circumstances. Believers in the doctrine of divine love and human welfare, the gospel of charity, liberty, reconciliation and righteousness, you have come together as the representatives of our denomination, to strengthen each other's hands and encourage each other's hearts. You are all welcome, and the great company who have come up hither with you are also welcome to the influences and the privileges of the time. Our large spirit welcomes *both* wings of our churches. Everything that will bear us up we cannot spare. We welcome, also, even what I once heard rather wittily described as "feathers that the bird seemed to have dropped." We

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expect on this occasion that we are to receive instruction from the most thoughtful minds among us; that we are to deliberate upon the interests committed to our charge; and are to bear constantly in mind that the purpose of this meeting, as expressed in its constitution, is to the end of energizing and stimulating the denomination with which we are connected, to the largest exertions in the cause of Christian faith. Upon the accomplishment of that purpose let us now enter.

The Secretary, on behalf of the Council, presented the following resolutions:—

Resolved, That the rules of the last Conference be adopted as the rules of the present Conference, until otherwise ordered.

Resolved, That a Business Committee of seven be appointed by the Chair, to whom all new business shall be referred, and to whom the order of business shall be entrusted; they shall report for the consideration of the Conference all resolutions brought before them, and unless otherwise ordered by the Conference, shall report at each morning session ten minutes, and at each afternoon session thirty minutes before the hour of adjournment.

Resolved, That the discussions proceed in the order suggested by the Council until the committee shall report.

Resolved, That until otherwise ordered there shall be a devotional meeting each morning at 9 o'clock, in the Town Hall; that the Conference shall meet at 10 A. M. and adjourn at 1 P. M., meet at 3 P. M. and adjourn at 5, and that the evening session shall commence at 7.30.

The rules adopted were as follows:—

1. No member, without special leave of the Conference, shall speak more than ten minntes at a time, or more than once on the same subject, except in explanation.

2. The ruling of the President, on points of order, shall not be debatable.

3. In other respects the Conference will be governed by the ordinary parliamentary rules, as laid down in Cushing's "Manual," as far as applicable to the business and organization of this Conference.

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4. All audible approbation or disapprobation shall be regarded as a breach of order.

The resolutions and rules of order were unanimously adopted.

The following Committees were appointed by the Chair:— *On Credentials:* George W. Warren, of Boston; George Nichols, of Germantown, Pa.; Rev. J. L. Seward, of Lowell. *On Nominations:* Rev. C. G. Ames and Charles G. Wood, of Boston; Rev. J. C. Kimball, of Hartford, Ct.; Rev. J. F. Moors, of Greenfield; Dorman B. Eaton, of New York. *On Business:* Rev. A. Woodbury, of Providence; Nathan H. Skinner, of Taunton; D. L. Shorey, of Chicago; H. P. Kidder, of Boston; Rev. J. C. Learned, of St. Louis: Hon. P. C. Cheney, of Manchester, N. H.; Rev. L. G. Ware, of Burlington, Vt.

Rev. Fred. Meakin, of Taunton, was appointed Assistant Secretary of the Conference.

Rev. James Freeman Clarke, D.D., of Boston, then read an essay, on "The New Theology."

The Essay was discussed by Rev. Wm. R. Alger and Rev. R. P. Stebbins, D.D. Adjourned.

3 P. M. The Report of the Council was read by Rev. H. W. Bellows, D.D.

Rev. J. Ll. Jones read a consolidated report of the Western Conferences.

Rev. S. H. Camp read the reports of the Middle States and the New York and Hudson River Conferences.

Rev. N. P. Gilman read a report of the Conferences in New England.

Resolutions were offered, which went to the Committee on Business. Adjourned.

7.30. A meeting was held, under the charge of Rev. C. A. Staples.

Subject: "The Education of our Children."

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Speakers: Rev. C. A. Staples, of Providence, R. I.; Rev. J. F. Moors, of Greenfield, Mass.; Rev. E. A. Horton, of Hingham, Mass.; Rev. Thos. Hill, D.D., of Portland, Me,; Rev. E. H. Hall, of Worcester, Mass.; and Rev. S. R. Calthrop, of Syracuse, N. Y.

THURSDAY, SEPT. 19TH.

9 o'clock. Conference meeting, led by Rev. S. R. Calthrop. Subject, "Christ."

10 o'clock. Rev. C. C. Everett, D. D., read an Essay on "The New Ethics."

The Essay was discussed by Rev. J. C. Learned, of St. Louis, Mo., and Rev. G. A. Thayer, of So. Boston, Mass.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the following resolutions were reported by Rev. Aug. Woodbury, from the Committee on Business:—

Resolved, That all resolutions bringing new business before the Conference shall be presented before twelve o'clock meridian on Friday. Adopted.

The Committee on business reported the following resolution (offered by Rev. N. P. Gilman) without recommendation.

Resolved, That this Conference recommends to the American Unitarian Association the early preparation of a book of religious songs that shall be convenient in size, low in price, and adapted in its words and tunes to popular use. Referred to the Council.

Four resolutions as substitutes for the resolutions offered by Rev. E. E. Hale, and those presented by the Council, relative to the appointment of additional missionaries:—

Resolved, That this Conference judge it expedient and most desira-

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ble to appoint three missionaries at large to work in such new fields and by such methods as the Board of Directors of the American Unitarian Association may deliberately advise. [Adopted.]

Resolved, That the Board of Directors of the American Unitarian Association, in consultation with the Council, be requested to appoint such missionaries as soon as sufficient contributions shall have been made to the Association to defray the expense of their support. [Adopted.]

Resolved, That the appointment of special missionaries is not designed to diminish or supersede the general missionary work already carried on by the American Unitarian Association, and that consultation and harmony between the Council and the Directors of the Association is earnestly commended and expected of both agencies. [Adopted.]

Resolved, That this Conference pledges the churches it represents to the increased support of the American Unitarian Association in providing means necessary to carry out the purposes of the foregoing resolution. [Adopted.]

Resolutions offered by Rev. C. A. Staples, relative to the education of our children, reduced to the following form :—

Resolved, That in view of the demand for the best possible education of our children, this Conference appoint a committee of seven persons, to be nominated by the President, to take into consideration the subject of the foundation and endowment of one or more schools for the education of girls, where means for the best culture can be provided at moderate cost, and whose pupils will be free from sectarian influence; to devise plans for the establishment and organization of such schools, and to report upon the same to the Council at some time previous to the next meeting of the Conference. [Adopted.]

Two resolutions relative to particular schools :—

Resolved, That this Conference observe with high approval the self-sacrificing endeavors of the church in Greenfield, Mass., and its minister, to establish a High School or Academy in that place, in which the daughters of our Unitarian families can be educated, at moderate expense, with great thoroughness and with perfect security against the sectarian influences that lie in wait for them, in most endowed schools

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of the same class in all parts of the country; and that it would encourage the hope of the trustees that more Unitarian parents would patronize the school, and that our liberal-handed men, among their denominational charities, would not forget to enroll this. [Adopted.]

Resolved, That the Conference recommends Antioch College among the minor and inexpensive colleges of the country, as the one where Unitarian boys and girls may find excellent opportunities in elementary and in advanced education, with sound and liberal religious influence and teaching, and a pure moral atmosphere; and that its healthful situation, its social connection, and its academic advantages entitle it to the confidence and support of the denomination. [Adopted.]

Two resolutions offered by the President of the Council:—

Resolved, That the National Conference extends to Rev. Dr. Oliver Stearns, late Dean of the Divinity School at Cambridge, and formerly President of the Meadville Theological School, its profound thanks for his long and useful services, as instructor, guide, and example in forming the minds and characters of our students in the ministry; that his diligence, ability, faithfulness and piety, have commanded our entire respect, and the love and honor of all those—both the recipients of his teachings and witnesses of his spirit—who have watched with ever-increasing delight and satisfaction his long and consecrated career; that the prayer and gratitude of the churches will accompany him to his retirement, with the earnest hope that he may "bring forth fruit in his old age," and continue to serve our cause with his pen and his voice. [Adopted.]

Resolved, That the National Conference has heard with great satisfaction of the existence and of the success of the first meeting of the Ministers' Institute; that it warmly recommends attendance upon its future sessions of all our ministers; that it endorses the freedom and the fearlessness which it seeks to promote in the examination of theological and biblical questions, and has full confidence in the wholesome results of all reverential inquiries, thorough and searching, believing that the source of all truth is not served by ignorance, blindness, or fear; but only by knowledge, clearness of vision, and love. The Conference commends the Ministers' Institute to the hospitality of the churches, and points with gratitude and pride to the example of the church in Springfield as a model useful to follow, if difficult to

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copy, in its generous and beautiful entertainment of the Ministers' Institute, at its first session. [Adopted.] Adjourned.

3 o'clock. A resolution offered by Rev. A. A. Livermore, proposing to raise, through the agency of the American Unitarian Association, an endowment fund of $15,000 for the Meadville Theological School, was referred to the Business Committee.

The Report of the American Unitarian Association was read by Rev. R. R. Shippen, Secretary.

Mr. Geo. Partridge of St. Louis made a statement of work done in St. Louis.

The Report of the Sunday School Society was read by Rev. Geo. F. Piper, Secretary.

The Report of the Bureau of Ministerial Supply was read by Rev. E. C. Guild, Chairman.

A resolution submitted by the Council providing that the Committee of Fellowship be charged with the duty of inquiring into the character and fitness of candidates for the ministry, was sharply discussed.

The following resolution, passed by the Directors of the American Unitarian Association, was read:—

WHEREAS, The large and increasing number of ministers from other sects attracted towards the Unitarian denomination, renders important some assurance of their fitness for our ministry,—

Resolved, That in the opinion of this Board the National Conference should appoint a Committee of Fellowship, consisting of both laymen and clergymen, who shall have authority, directly or through the agency of local conferences, to pass upon the moral character and other qualifications of candidates for the Unitarian ministry; and that all societies seeking pastors in the future, be earnestly urged to open their pulpits to none but those having the approval of said Committee.

The following protest of the Wisconsin Conference was also read:—

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Rev. Geo. Batchelor, Sec. National Conference.—Dear Sir: It is proper that I transmit to you the following portion of proceedings at our late session of the Wisconsin Conference:—

The Wisconsin Conference of Unitarian and Independent Societies, assembled at Milwaukee, Aug. 24, 1878, respectfully but firmly enters its unanimous protest against the resolution adopted at a late meeting of the American Unitarian Association, recommending censorship of denominational pulpits. The Conference believes that *Societies*, and Societies alone, ought to be judges of the qualifications of their ministers, and that any attempt to curtail the individual responsibility of Societies seeking for ministers, to inquire into qualifications and character, is hurtful to the independent policy of our churches, and injurious to the natural and healthy operation of business principles in managing their affairs.

The Wisconsin Conference objects to the Preamble of the Resolution as inhospitable in its tone and apparent intent; and objects to *any and every* movement which even seems to make the Unitarian policy anything less than the purest system of Independency, believing that thereby the greatest fraternity may be subserved.

For the Conference,

JUDSON FISHER, Secretary.

Monroe, Wis., Aug. 27, 1878.

Rev. C. G. Ames offered an amendment, providing that each Local Conference be advised to create its own Committee of Fellowship.

D. L. Shorey offered another amendment; and after brief and lively discussion, on motion of Dr. Stebbins, the whole matter was sent back to the Business Committee, with instructions to report a new resolution, with a view to harmonizing the various views.

The Business Committee reported the following resolutions, submitted by the Council:—

Resolved, That this Conference, while fully recognizing the absolute right and freedom of each congregation to conduct its own worship in its own way, and according to its own order, would still commend to all our churches a careful consideration of all means for improving the dignity of worship and the co-operation of the people with the minister in acts of prayer and praise, to the end that some

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opportunity be offered the members of the congregation of joining their own voices to that of the officiating minister. [Adopted.]

Resolved, That the production of manuals of devotion and helps to public worship should be encouraged by the American Unitarian Association in its endeavors to increase, improve, and spread the literature of the denomination, and improve the methods in use among new congregations. [Adopted.]

Resolved, That the Conference tenders its hearty thanks to the Secretary of the Association for his successful revision of the "Hymn and Tune Book," and for the additional services of worship therein printed; and, without favoring the abandonment of the practice of spontaneous prayer, would warmly recommend, both to our old and new societies, the use of these services in the exercises of public worship. [Adopted.]

Resolved, That the Conference has heard with deep interest the Report of the Sunday School Society; that it strongly approves the work and purposes of the society, and heartily commends them to the support of our churches. [Adopted.]

Resolved, That the Unitarian churches and people be earnestly urged to contribute at least $50,000 to the treasury of the American Unitarian Association during the coming year; and that the several churches be requested to make their collection by systematic effort, and as early as possible after the close of this Conference. [Adopted.]

7.30 P. M. A missionary meeting was held, Rev. R. R. Shippen, conducting.

Addresses were made by Gen. Armstrong, of the Hampton School, Va.; Rev. Clay MacCauley, Washington, D. C.; Rev. C. W. Buck, Portland, Me.; Rev. J. Ll. Jones, Janesville, Wis.; Rev. J. F. W. Ware, Boston, Mass.; Rev. Grindall Reynolds, Concord, Mass., and Hon. John D. Long, Hingham, Mass.

FRIDAY, SEPT. 20TH.

9 o'clock. Conference Meeting, conducted by Rev. C. F. Dole, Jamaica Plain, Mass. Subject, "Immortality."

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10 o'clock. Rev. Aug. Woodbury, from the Business Committee, reported an order of business for the day, and moved that the business of the Conference be finished before its rise from the present session. The motion was agreed to; and two other resolutions were referred to the Business Committee, under the rules.

Hon. Geo. Wm. Curtis then read an Essay upon "Morals and Politics."

The Essay was discussed by Hon. D. B. Eaton, of New York.

The Meadville resolution was taken up as unfinished business. A long discussion followed, Dr. A. A. Livermore opening it by a presentation of the claims of Meadville. The sense of the meeting seemed to be, that while these claims must be conceded to be most pressing, and the duty of Unitarians to listen to them most urgent, it would not be wise to commit to the Association, through the action of the Conference, the duty of raising the funds required. Mr. Samuel May suggested that subscriptions should be taken on the spot, believing that there was sufficient interest to secure the raising of the whole amount. Rev. J. Ll. Jones, on leaving for the train, said he would give $100; and Mr. May said he could not give less, though he would like to give more. No further action in that direction, however, was taken; and the resolution was finally submitted in the following form:—

WHEREAS, In consideration of the services of the Meadville Theological School to liberal Christianity in the past, and the opportunities for its continued and enlarged usefulness, it appeals to the sympathies and missionary patronage of the National Conference in their plans of work and propagandism; and,—

WHEREAS, The trustees of the school, through their treasurer, Prof. Frederick Huidekoper, ask for an additional endowment of $15,000, for the pressing needs of the institution; therefore,—

Resolved, That the Conference fully acknowledges the claims of Meadville, and recommends to the members and the ministers the

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raising of the sum of $15,000 by all the personal influence they can exert during the next six months. [Adopted.]

The Committee on Business then reported back the following resolutions, amended according to the instructions of the Conference:—

Resolved, That the Committee on Fellowship, to be chosen by the Conference, be directed to take into immediate consideration the subject of the introduction into the Unitarian ministry of those persons who seek an entrance into that ministry from other churches, and those who have not received a certificate of their moral character and ministerial education from either of our own theological schools, or from the theological schools of our faith in England. [Adopted.]

Resolved, That the Committee on Fellowship be instructed to prepare, as soon as possible, some regulation, plan, or method, by which such introduction may be made, with the view of welcoming to our fellowship such persons as may be sincerely desirous of enjoying the larger freedom and the clearer light of our faith, and of assuring to our ministry the addition of such as are fitted by character and intellectual qualifications to render good service to the cause of truth. [Adopted.]

Resolved, That this committee be directed to send a copy of such regulation, plan, or method, to the secretary of each of the local conferences in the denomination, with the request that the executive officers of such conferences shall put it into practical execution in the way and manner which shall be deemed the most efficient toward securing the end in view. [Adopted.]

Resolved, That a certificate of the acceptance by any local conference of any applicant for admission to our ministry, in accordance with the spirit of these resolutions, filed at the office of the secretary of the American Unitarian Association, shall entitle such person to be received into the fellowship of the Unitarian churches, and to be enrolled in the ranks of the Unitarian ministry. [Adopted.]

The Committee on Nominations presented the following report:—

For President.—Hon. E. R. Hoar, Concord, Mass.

For Vice-Presidents.— Hon. S. F. Miller, Keokuk, Iowa; Geo.

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O. Shattuck, Esq., Boston; Jos. H. Choate, Esq., New York city; Hon. P. C. Cheney, Manchester, N. H.; Hon. E. Carlton Sprague, Buffalo, N. Y.; Hon. Thomas Talbot, Billerica, Mass.

For the Council.—Old members: Rev. H. W. Bellows, D. D., New York; Rev. C. A. Staples, Providence, R. I.; A. S. Wheeler, Esq., Boston, Mass.; Mr. H. P. Kidder, Boston, Mass.

New members: Rev. Grindall Reynolds, Concord, Mass.; Rev. Edward H. Hall, Worcester, Mass.; Hon. John D. Long, Hingham, Mass.; John F. Kimball, Esq., Lowell, Mass.; Elliott C. Cowdin, Esq., New York; and to fill unexpired term, Rev. Jenk. Ll. Jones, Janesville, Wis.

For General Secretary.—Rev. George Batchelor, Salem, Mass.

For Treasurer.—Rev. Adams Ayer, Boston.

For Committee on Fellowship.—For the Eastern States: Rev. C. C. Everett, D. D., Cambridge, Mass.; Rev. Augustus Woodbury, Providence, R. I.; Rev. James DeNormandie, Portsmouth, N. H.

For the Middle States: Rev. A. A. Livermore, Meadville, Penn.; Rev. S. R. Calthrop, Syracuse, N. Y.; Rev. Geo. W. Cutter, Buffalo, N. Y.

For the Western States: Rev. Brooke Herford, Chicago; Rev. J. R. Effinger, Des Moines, Iowa; Rev. Jenk. Ll. Jones, Janesville, Wis.

The Nominating Committee also suggested the addition of the following names to the Committee on Fellowship:—

For the Pacific States: Rev. Horatio Stebbins, D. D., San Francisco, Cal.; Rev. Thos. L. Eliot, Portland, Oregon; Rev. David N. Utter, Olympia, W. T.

The suggestion of the committee was accepted, and all the nominees were elected.

The Chair appointed the following committee on the education of our children: Rev. Rufus Ellis, D. D., Boston, Mass.; Mrs. J. P. Walker, Jamaica Plain, Mass.; Hon. Jno. Cummings, Woburn, Mass.; Rev. C. A. Staples, Providence, R. I.; Miss Lucretia Crocker, Boston, Mass.; Rev. J. F. Moors, Greenfield, Mass.; Hon. Jno. D. Long, Hingham, Mass.

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Mr. G. Washington Warren, from the Committee on Credentials, submitted the following :—

The Committee on Credentials report that it appears, from the credentials which have been presented by the duly constituted members of the Conference, that two hundred and one churches and nineteen associations are represented by five hundred and thirty-one delegates coming from nineteen of the United States, from the District of Columbia, and from the Dominion of Canada. [Report accepted.]

Mr. Woodbury, from the Business Committee, reported the following resolutions :—

A resolution offered by Rev. Mr. May, of Leicester :—

Resolved, That with deep interest in the reform movement, so called, whereby so many victims of intemperance, putting forth their utmost strength and relying upon the sure promise of Almighty help, have been rescued from a most fearful bondage, we commend that cause to all our churches, people, and ministers, entreating them to lend it their active aid; especially would we urge that they give personal spmpathy and support to those who are striving to keep their faith and stand fast in their new-found manhood. [Adopted.]

Two resolutions offered by Mr. O. G. Steele, of Buffalo, N. Y. :—

Resolved, That the subject of disseminating the literature of our faith and general principles is one which should command the attention of our people for their own instruction and edification, as well as to reach the great body of Christian people who may desire, or be induced, to give attention to the great subjects in which we are all so deeply interested.

Resolved, That the several societies connected with, or represented in this Conference, be earnestly requested to organize a "Book Association" for the purpose of providing a full supply of the books published by the American Unitarian Association, or by others of the same general character, for a general library for the members of their societies, as well as placing a supply of literature relating to our faith and organization in the private libraries of their members.

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These two resolutions, by recommendation of the Business Committee, were referred to the Council.

Resolved, That the cordial thanks of the Conference be tendered to the trustees of the Washington Street Methodist Episcopal Church for their generous and Christian courtesy in offering to the Conference for its sessions the use of their house of worship. Their liberality is thoroughly appreciated, and will be long and gratefully remembered. [Adopted.]

Rev. C. G. Ames offered the following resolution (*nem. con.*)

Resolved, That with a view to make the mature deliberations and the enthusiasm of this Conference the common property of our churches, we recommend and urge that each delegation procure, at an early day, and on Sunday if practicable, a special meeting of the congregation it represents, at which meeting a report of the proceedings of this Conference may be heard and considered. [Adopted.]

The business of the Conference being now finished, Rev. Dr. Bellows led the assembly in a concluding prayer.

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CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

OF THE

NATIONAL CONFERENCE.

CONSTITUTION.

PREAMBLE.— *Whereas*, The great opportunities and demands for christian labor and consecration at this time increase our sense of the obligations of all disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, to prove their faith by self-denial, and by the devotion of their lives and possessions to the service of God and the building up of the kingdom of His Son,—

ARTICLE I.—Therefore, the christian churches of the Unitarian faith here assembled, unite themselves in a common body, to be known as the National Conference of Unitarian and other Christian Churches, to the end of energizing and stimulating the denomination with which they are connected, to the largest exertions in the cause of christian faith and work.

ARTICLE II.—This National Conference shall be composed of such delegates, elected once in two years, not to exceed three from any church, including its minister, who shall officially be one, as any of our churches may accredit to it by a certificate of their appointment.

ARTICLE III.—The American Unitarian Association, the Western Conference, and such other theological, academic, or humane organizations in our body as the Conference may see fit to invite, shall be entitled to representation by not more than three delegates each.

ARTICLE IV.—The Conference shall meet biennially at such time and place as it may designate at its successive biennial sessions.

ARTICLE V.—Its officers shall consist of a President; six Vice Presidents; a General Secretary; a Treasurer; and a Council of ten, half ministers and half laymen; who shall be elected at each

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meeting to hold their offices for two years, and until their successors are appointed. And half the number of the Council shall consist of new members, the oldest members being retired at each election and giving place to the new members.

ARTICLE VI.—The Council, during the intervals of the biennial sessions, may fill vacancies in the board of government, and shall have charge of all business having reference to the interests of the Conference, and intrusted to it by that body, which is hereby declared a purely advisory one.

ARTICLE VII.—The National Conference, until further advised by its experience, adopts the existing organizations of the Unitarian body as the instruments of its power, and confines itself to recommending them to such undertakings and methods as it judges to be in the heart of the Unitarian denomination.

ARTICLE VIII.—This Constitution may be amended at any regular meeting of the Conference, by a vote of not less than two-thirds of the delegates accredited thereto.

ARTICLE IX.—Reaffirming our allegiance to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and desiring to secure the largest unity of the spirit, and the widest practical co-operation, we invite to our fellowship all who wish to be followers of Christ.

BY-LAWS.

1. Three months at least before the time fixed by the National Conference for its biennial meeting, the Council shall issue a circular letter of call to the churches and organizations in its fellowship, accompanying it with a form of certificate, the production of which shall be the proof of membership of the Conference until others are elected, unless otherwise ordered by the Conference.

2. The General Secretary shall keep a full report of the proceedings of the body, which shall be published at the expense of the Conference, and a copy sent to every delegate.

3. The Council at the conclusion of each Conference shall issue an address to the churches and organizations in our body, whether members of this Conference or not, to be published with the proceedings of the Conference, containing such advice and encouragement as it may deem appropriate, but especially communicating to the churches and organizations the recommendations of the Conference in regard to plans and methods of work; the amount of money required for

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the uses of the year; the special objects to which they would advise its appropriation, with such suggestions as to a just apportionment of the burden as they may judge expedient and becoming.

4. The Council shall have it for its duty to keep itself accurately informed of the plans and operations of the various organizations of our Body, and of the state of the individual churches; inviting correspondence and soliciting reports, to be sent in one month before the biennial meeting, in which the general condition of the parish, its Sunday School, charities, and general working, may be set forth, to the end that the Conference may know what the wants and the wishes of the churches are, somewhat more particularly than it is possible to learn in the necessary hurry of the biennial meeting.

5. The General Secretary of the National Conference shall be the person to whom all letters and communications shall be addressed; and he shall be *ex officio*, a member of the Council, and constitute its Secretary.

6. The list of delegates, churches and organizations, represented in each Conference, shall be part of the biennial report. The archives of the Conference shall be in the keeping of the General Secretary, subject to inspection and temporary possession by the Council.

7. A collection shall be taken up among the delegates at each Conference, to which any others may contribute, to defray the incidental expenses of the Conference, such as printing the report, etc.

8. Each church in this Conference is recommended to defray the expenses of its delegates.

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LIST OF DELEGATES.

MAINE.

AUGUSTA.—Christ Church.
*Rev. Charles A. Curtis, *Selden Connor, *Samuel Titcomb.

BANGOR.—Independent Congregational Church.
Thomas W. Baldwin, Miss C. A. Baldwin.

BELFAST.—First Parish.
Rev. J. T. Bixby.

BRUNSWICK.—Unitarian Society of Brunswick.
Miss Harriet Tebbetts, *Miss Annie E. Purinton.

CALAIS.—Calais Unitarian Society.
*Rev. W. W. Lovejoy, Hon. Jos. Granger, Mrs. J. Granger.

EASTPORT.—First Congregational Society.
Rev. Thos. W. Brown, John W. Hinckley, Miss Annie E. Hinckley.

ELLSWORTH.—First Unitarian Society.
Rev. C. P. Lombard, Rev. W. H. Lyon, Mrs. Lombard.

KENNEBUNK.—First Congregational Parish.
Rev. Chas. C. Vinal, Daniel Remick, Hon. Jos. Dane.

PORTLAND.—First Parish.
Rev. Thos. Hill, D. D., Mark P. Emery, Joseph Ilsley.

PORTLAND.—Second Unitarian Parish.
Rev. Charles W. Buck, T. C. Hersey, Miss M. T. Hersey.

PORTLAND.—Preble Chapel.
Rev. W. T. Phelan.

NEW HAMPSHIRE.

CHARLESTOWN.—South Parish.
*Rev. Alpheus S. Nickerson, George Hubbard, Miss Carrie Hunt.

CONCORD.—Second Congregational Society.
Rev. S. C. Beane, Joseph C. A. Hill, Lewis Downing.

DOVER.—First Unitarian Society of Christians.
*Rev. C. A. Allen, *James B. Barnes, *T. P. Cressey.

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DUBLIN—First Congregational Society.

Miss Eliza Adams.

EXETER.—First Unitarian Society.

Rev. Benj. F. McDaniel, *C. H. Healey, Mrs. B. F. McDaniel.

FITZWILLIAM.—First Congregational Society.

Mrs. Chas. Perry.

HAMPTON FALLS.—First Congregational Society.

Rev. B. F. McDaniels.

KEENE.—Keene Congregational Society.

Rev. Wm. O. White, F. F. Lane, Mrs. A. L. Burt.

LACONIA.—First Unitarian Society.

Rev. Enoch Powell, *John C. Moulton, *Mrs. John C. Moulton.

MANCHESTER.—First Unitarian Society.

Rev. H. Powers, P. C. Cheney, Chas. L. Richardson.

MILFORD.—First Unitarian Society.

*Rev. A. M. Pendleton, Miss Elizabeth A. Livermore, Miss Phebe A. Lovejoy.

NASHUA.—First Congregational Society.

Solomon Spalding, Mrs. Solomon Spalding.

PETERBORO.—The Congregational Church.

Rev. A. W. Jackson, Mrs. C. B. B. Jackson.

PORTSMOUTH.—South Parish.

Rev. James DeNormandie, John Sise, Mrs. W. H. Hackett.

WALPOLE.—Walpole Town Congregational Society.

Rev. Wm. Brown, Mrs. Wm. Brown, Miss Lydia Maynard.

WILTON.—First Congregational Church and Society.

Rev. I. S. Lincoln, Mrs. H. Morse, Miss E. Spalding.

WILTON, EAST.—Liberal Christian Church.

Rev. Chas H. Tindell, Frank M. Pevey, M.D., Elbridge G. Woodman.

VERMONT.

BRATTLEBORO.—Unitarian Congregational Church.

*Rev. Wm. L. Jenkins, Dorman B. Eaton, Mrs. Charles Warder.

BURLINGTON.—First Congregational Church.

Rev. L. G. Ware, Henry Green, Mrs. M. L. Benedict.

MONTPELIER.—Church of the Messiah.

*Rev. J. Edward Wright, *Geo. W. Reed, Mrs. H. S. Loomis.

STOWE.—First Unitarian Society.

*Rev. W. H. Walbridge, *Mrs. W. H. Walbridge, *Mrs. M. N. Wilkins.

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WINDSOR.—Unitarian Society.
*Rev. Wm. Hooper, *Alfred Weston, *Orlando L. Patrick.

MASSACHUSETTS.

ANDOVER, NORTH.—North Parish Church and Society.
*Rev. John H. Clifford, *Moses T. Stevens, Miss King.
ARLINGTON.—First Congregational Parish.
*Rev. W. J. Parrot, Wm. E. Parmenter, Mrs Wm. E. Parmenter.
ASHBY.—First Parish.
Rev. Geo. S. Shaw, Cyrus P. Gates, Mrs. Abby S. Sheldon.
ATHOL.—First Congregational Church.
Rev. E. P. Gibbs, Ira Bailey.
ATHOL.—Second Unitarian Society.
Rev. J. C. Parsons, Alpheus Harding, George T. Johnson.
AYER.—First Parish.
Rev. Alfred E. Goodnough, E. Dana Bancroft.
BARNSTABLE.—Cong. Church and Society in E. Precinct.
Rev. R. P. E. Thacher, Mrs. S. B. Phinney, *Mrs. Jos. M. Day.
BARRE.—First Parish.
James W. Jenkins, Chauncy Loring.
BEDFORD.—First Parish.
Thomas Stiles, Albert Bacon, Mrs. Thomas Stiles.
BELMONT.—Belmont Congregational Society.
Rev. I. F. Waterhouse, J. V. Fletcher, Mrs. J. V. Fletcher.
BERLIN.—First Unitarian Society.
Rev. Francis S. Thacher, Leslie Hastings, Mrs. Carrie Hastings.
BERNARDSTON.—First Congregational Church.
Rev. S. B. Flagg, S. B. Slate, Mrs. Slate.
BEVERLY.—First Parish.
Miss S. H. Hayward.
BILLERICA.—First Congregational Society.
Rev. C. C. Hussey, Luther W. Faulkner, Mrs. Luther W. Faulkner.
BOLTON.—First Congregational Church.
George B. Newton, Mrs. Sarah Reed, Miss Sophia C. Edes.
BOSTON.—First Parish of Dorchester.
Rev. S. J. Barrows, Dea. Eben'r Clapp, Hiram Clapp.
BOSTON.—First Church in Boston.
Rev. Rufus Ellis, D.D., Geo. Washington Warren, J. B. Moors.
BOSTON (Highlands).—First Religious Society in Roxbury.
Rev. John G. Brooks, Rev. Adams Ayer, Edward B. Reynolds.

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Boston.—Second Church.
F. W. Lincoln, T. W. Whidden, W. W. Warren.
Boston (W. Roxbury)—First Cong. Parish of W. Roxbury.
Rev. A. M. Haskell.
Boston.—Church in Arlington street.
Rev. J. F. W. Ware, A. D. Hubbard, W. H. Horton.
Boston (Brighton).—First Parish of Brighton.
*Rev. Wm. Brunton, J. P. C. Winship, Bela S. Fiske.
Boston.—Hollis Street Church.
Dea. John Capen, Joseph Greeley, Mrs. Joseph Greeley.
Boston (Jamaica Plains).—First Cong. Soc. Jamaica Plain.
Rev. Charles F. Dole, T. B. Frothingham, Mrs. James P. Walker.
Boston.—Harrison Square Unitarian Society.
Rev. Caleb D. Bradlee, Nathan Weston, Mrs. Nathan Weston.
Boston (Charlestown).—Harvard Church.
Rev. Pitt Dillingham, H. H. Edes, *Wm. Murray.
Boston South.—Hawes Place Congregational Society.
Rev. Herman Bisbee, Miss Susan P. Bent, *Mrs. Pringle.
Boston.—South Congregational Church.
Rev. E. E. Hale, James W. Brown, Wm. H. Kendall.
Boston.—Warren Street Chapel.
*Rev. Wm. G. Babcock, Samuel Weltch, Thomas Hills.
Boston.—Church of the Disciples.
Rev. Jas. Freeman Clarke, *Thomas H. Burgess, Wm. H. Baldwin.
Boston South.—Second Hawes Cong. Unitarian Society.
Rev. Geo. A. Thayer, Henry Souther, Mrs. Geo. E. Alden.
Boston (Highlands).—Mount Pleasant Cong. Church.
*Rev. C. C. Carpenter, George P. K. Walker, Mrs. T. N. Daniel.
Boston.—Third Religious Society, Dorchester.
*Rev. George M. Bodge, *John C. Talbot, Mrs. Chas. F. Swan.
Boston.—Hanover Street Chapel.
*Rev. Edwin J. Gerry, George Gould, *John G. Kaulback, Jr.
Boston.—Church of the Unity.
Rev. M. J. Savage, Daniel Needham, W. W. Blackman.
Boston (Neponset).—Church of the Unity.
Rev. A. C. Nickerson, Chas. H. Codman, Laban Pratt.
Boston.—New South Free Church.
*Rev. Wm. P. Tilden, Hammond Vinal, John K. Fuller.
Brewster.—First Parish.
*Rev. Thomas Dawes, *Capt. Elisha Bangs, Mrs. E. D. Winslow.

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BRIDGEWATER, WEST.—First Congregational Society.
*Rev. David H. Montgomery, Mrs. Geo. A. Copeland, Mr. Nathan Copeland.

BRIDGEWATER, EAST.—East Church.
*Rev. John W. Quinby, John W. Kennan, Mrs. John W. Kennan.

BRIDGEWATER.—First Congregational Society.
Rev. George Herbert Hosmer, *Isaac Damon, *Mrs. Isaac Damon.

BROOKFIELD.—First Congregational Church.
Rev. A. J. Rich, C. H. Griffin, Mrs. C. H. Griffin.

BROOKLINE.—First Parish.
Rev. Howard N. Brown, Mr. Geo. D. Noyes, Mrs. Geo. D. Noyes,

CAMBRIDGE.—First Parish.
*Rev. Francis G. Peabody, Mrs. John Bartlett, Ezra Abbot, LL. D.

CAMBRIDGE, EAST.—Third Congregational Society.
Otis S. Brown, Mrs. Otis S. Brown, Mrs. J. K. Lawrence.

CAMBRIDGEPORT.—The Cambridgeport Parish.
Rev. G. W. Briggs, D.D., Jason Winnett, Elijah H. Lake.

CAMBRIDGEPORT.—Lee Street Church.
*Rev. J. P. Bland, *D. A. Buckley, *Mrs. D. A. Buckley.

CANTON.—First Congregational Parish.
Rev. Wm. H. Savary, Frank M. Ames, Mrs. Anna H. Savary.

CARLISLE.—First Religious Society.
*Rev. James J. Twiss, H. W. Wilson, Mr. J. E. Bull.

CHELMSFORD.—First Congregational Society.
Mrs. J. C. Bartlett, Mrs. E. A. Adams.

CHICOPEE.—First Unitarian Society.
*Rev. I. F. Porter, Mrs. Jerome Wells, *Mrs. Alfred White.

CLINTON.—First Unitarian Society.
Rev. Charles Noyes, Frank Holman, Alice Young.

COHASSET.—First Parish.
Rev. Joseph Osgood, *A. H. Tower, *Levi N. Bates.

CONCORD.—First Parish.
Rev. Grindall Reynolds, R. N. Rice, Miss Ellen T. Emerson.

DANVERS.—Unitarian Congregational Society.
Rev. L. J. Livermore, Calvin Putnam, Mrs. Calvin Putnam.

DEDHAM.—First Parish.
*Rev. S. C. Beach, Mrs. George F. Fisher, *Miss Mary C. Talbot.

DEDHAM, WEST.—Third Parish.
Rev. Edward Crowninshield, Mr. E. E. Gay, Miss Mary L. Talbot.

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DEERFIELD.—First Congregational Church.
*Rev. Edgar Buckingham, Josiah Fogg, Mrs. Hannah Jenks.
DIGHTON.—Pedo-baptist Congregational Society.
Rev. W. H. Reeby, Mrs. N. T. Baxter, Mrs. D. B. Shove.
DOVER.—First Parish.
*Rev. Calvin S. Locke, *Mrs. G. D. Everett, *Mrs. S. M. Colcord.
EASTON, NORTH.—North Easton Unitarian Society.
Rev. Wm. L. Chaffin, Mrs. Oakes Ames, Mrs. R. H. Chaffin.
FAIRHAVEN.—Washington Street Christian Church.
*Rev. J. M. Leighton, Ellery Taber, Mrs. Ellery Taber.
FALL RIVER.—Unitarian Society.
Rev. Edward F. Hayward, *Edmund Chace, Mrs. N. L. Hooper.
FITCHBURG—First Parish.
Rev. James T. Hewes, Mrs. Eben Torrey, Mrs. T. C. Caldwell.
FRAMINGHAM—First Church.
Rev. Chas. A. Humphreys, Willard Howe, Wm. G. Lewis.
GRAFTON—Congregational Society.
Rev. W. S. Burton, Winthrop Faulkner, Horace S. Warren.
GRANTVILLE.—Unitarian Society.
Rev. A. B. Vorse, Rev. C. G. Ames, Mrs. Fanny B. Ames.
GREENFIELD.—Third Congregational Church.
Rev. John F. Moors, R. A. Packard, Geo. A. Arms.
GROTON.—First Parish.
Rev. Joshua Young, Henry A. Bancroft, Charles H. Waters.
HINGHAM.—First Parish.
Rev. E. A. Horton, Arthur Lincoln, E. Waters Burr.
HINGHAM.—Third Congregation.
*Rev. Henry A. Miles, John D. Long, *Luther J. B. Lincoln.
HINGHAM, SOUTH.—Second Parish.
Rev. A. G. Jennings, Miss Clara A. Jacobs, Mrs. A. G. Jennings.
HOLYOKE.—Liberal Christian Congregational Society.
Rufus Mosher, *T. F. Kegan, Mrs. Rufus Mosher.
HOPEDALE.—Liberal Christian Parish.
*Mrs. Hannah B. Draper, *Mrs. Lilla J. Draper, *Mrs. C. H. Colburn.
HUBBARDSTON.—First Congregational Society.
Rev. H. W. Morse, Henry A. Farwell, Mrs. L. S. Morse.
HUDSON.—Union Society.
*Rev. Hilary Bygrave, James T. Joslin, F. Allen Brown.

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HYDE PARK.—Second Congregational Society.
Rev. Francis C. Williams, T. D. Weld, W. C. Bryant.
KINGSTON.—First Congregational Parish.
Rev. C. Y. DeNormandie, Wm. H. Burges, George T. Adams.
LAWRENCE.—First Unitarian Society.
Rev. E. R. Sanborn, Joseph Shattuck, C. D. McDuffie.
LEICESTER.—Second Congregational Society.
Samuel May, Mrs. Annie P. Upham, Miss Mary E. Joslyn.
LEOMINSTER.—First Congregational Society.
*Rev. Wm. H. Savage, J. G. Tenney, Mrs. J. G. Tenney.
LEXINGTON.—First Parish.
Rev. Henry Westcott, G. O. Davis, Mrs. G. O. Davis.
LINCOLN.—Unitarian Congregational Society.
*Edward Foster.
LITTLETON.—First Congregational Society.
Rev. J. W. Winckley, P. S. Whitcomb, Mrs. J. A. Harwood.
LOWELL.—First Unitarian Society.
Rev. Josiah L. Seward, George J. Carney, Mrs. D. B. Bartlett.
LYNN.—Second Congregational Society.
Rev. S. B. Stewart, Mr. W. G. S. Keene, Mrs. John G. Warner.
MALDEN.—First Congregational Unitarian Society.
Rev. D. M. Wilson, *N. W. Starbird, Mrs. G. J. Greenleaf.
MARLBOROUGH—West Parish.
*Rev. R. A. Griffin, *Edward L. Bigelow, Harriet N. Baker.
MEDFIELD.—First Congregational Parish.
Rev. Granville Pierce, *Mrs. G. H. Pierce, George Smith.
MELROSE.—Congregational Unitarian Society.
*Rev. Nath'l Seaver, Jr., John Kimball, Mrs. Addie Nichols.
MENDON.—First Parish.
*Rev. George F. Clark, *Julius A. George, *Mrs. Harriet E. Clark.
MILFORD.—The Unitarian Society of Hopedale.
Mrs. Hannah B. Draper, Mrs. Lilla J. Draper, Mrs. C. H. Colburn.
MILTON.—
Rev. F. Frothingham, Gideon Beck, Elizabeth R. Swift.
NATICK, SOUTH.—First Unitarian Parish.
Rev. J. P. Sheafe, Mrs. Sheafe, Mrs. Calvin Richards.
MILTON.—First Congregational Society.
*Rev. J. H. Morison, D. D., Rev. Fred Frothingham, Miss E. R. Swift.
NEEDHAM.—First Congregational Society.
Rev. S. W. Bush, Enos Tucker, Mrs. Enos Tucker.

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NEWBURYPORT.—First Religious Society.
Rev. G. L. Stowell, Moses E. Hale, Rev. Wm. O. Mosely.
NEWTON.—Channing Religious Society.
Rev. George W. Hosmer, Henry Claflin, David B. Flint.
NEWTON.—Chestnut Hill Society.
*Rev. John A. Buckingham, *D. D. Slade, M. D.,' Chas. H. Burrage.
WEST NEWTON.—First Unitarian Society.
Rev. Francis Tiffany, Benj. F. Otis, Benj. F. Brooks.
NEWTON CENTRE.—Unitarian Society.
Rev. Rufus P. Stebbins, D. D., D. Frank Young, J. D. Elliot.
NORTHAMPTON.—Second Congregational Church.
Rev. C. B. Ferry, Miss Lucilla O. Damon, Fred. A. Stockwell.
NORTHBORO.—First Congregational Church and Society.
Rev. Henry F. Bond, Mrs. Henry F. Bond, Mrs. Mary W. Johnson.
NORTHFIELD.—First Congregational Church.
Rev. S. P. Putnam, Oliver S. Mattoon, John L. Banks.
PEABODY.—First Unitarian Church.
*Rev. John W. Hudson, Mrs. Eliza Sutton, *George Upton.
PEMBROKE.—First Church.
Mrs. H. C. D. King, Mrs. F. G. Hersey, Susan A. Smith.
PETERSHAM.—First Congregational Society.
*Rev. Lyman Clark, Dea. David C. Paige, Mrs. Miranda Paige.
PLYMOUTH.—First Parish.
Mrs. Helen Whitman, Mrs. G. S. Tolman.
QUINCY.—First Congregational Society.
W. F. Whitney, Mrs. W. F. Whitney, Mrs. L. A. Floyd
READING.—Christian Union Church.
Rev. C. W. Heizer, Mary White, C. D. Wright.
REVERE.—First Congregational Society.
Rev. Henry F. Jenks, *Theodore Pinkham, *Lorenzo S. Kimball.
ROWE.—First Congregational Church.
Edmund Wilson, Mrs. Edmund Wilson.
SALEM.—First Congregational Society.
*Rev. F. Israel, Geo. H. Perkins, Mrs. E. S. C. Israel.
SALEM.—The North Society.
Rev. E. B. Willson, Francis Lee, Mrs. Lee.
SALEM.—Independent Cong. Church in Barton Square.
Rev. George Batchelor, James Chamberlain, N. A. Horton.

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SANDWICH.—First Church of Christ.
Mrs. J. Leonard.

SCITUATE, SOUTH.—First Parish.
*Rev. Wm. H. Fish, *Ebenezer T. Fogg, Mrs. Anne E. Fish.

SHARON.—First Congregational Society.
*Rev. W. G. Todd, *H. A. Lothrop, *Mrs. H. A. Lothrop.

SHERBORN.—First Congregational Church.
Rev. Eugene De Normandie, Mrs. Charles A. Clark, Mrs. Eugene De Normandie.

SHIRLEY.—First Congregational Society.
Samuel Longley, M. Tarbell Gardner.

SOMERVILLE.—First Congregational Society.
Rev. H. H. Barber, Fred. W. Webber, Henry F. Spencer.

SPRINGFIELD.—Third Congregational Society.
*Rev. A. D. Mayo, James M. Thompson, Homer Foot.

STOW.—First Parish.
*James B. Porter, *Mrs. M. B. Porter.

STURBRIDGE.—Unitarian Congregational Society.
*Rev. Clarence Fowler, Hon. E. L. Bates, Mrs. E. L. Bates.

SUDBURY.—First Congregational Society.
*Rev. A. M. Sherman, *Lucius P. Bent, *Miss Sarah Pratt.

SWAMPSCOTT.—Unitarian Society.
Rev. J. F. W. Ware, *Geo. B. Blake, *Chas. P. Curtis.

TAUNTON.—First Congregational Society.
Rev. Frederick Meakin, Edwin Keith, Nathan H. Skinner.

TEMPLETON.—First Parish.
Chas. S. Lord, Elizabeth A. Lord.

TYNGSBORO.—First Parish.
Rev. John S. Smith, J. P. Bridge, Mrs. J. P. Bridge.

UPTON.—First Unitarian Society.
Rev. Geo. S. Ball, Wm. Knowlton, Mrs. C. Batchelor.

UXBRIDGE.—First Congregational Society.
Rev. Geo. Bremner, Arthur Wheelock, Mrs. S. M. Wheelock.

VINEYARD HAVEN.—Church of the Unity.
*Rev. D. W. Stevens, *Richard Beetle, *Gilbert Smith.

WALPOLE.—First Congregational Society.
Rev. F. P. Hamblett, *Naaman B. Wilmarth, *Warren Hartshorn.

WALTHAM.—First Parish.
Rev. E. C. Guild, Dea. Nathan Viles, Lowell Clark.

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WARE.—First Unitarian Society.

*Rev. John L. Marsh, Hon. Chas. A. Stevens, Mrs. C. A. Stevens.

WARWICK.—First Congregational Parish.

*Nahum Jones, *Mrs. E. F. Mayo, *Mrs. E. C. Sibley.

WATERTOWN.—First Congregational Society.

Charles W. Stone, Mrs. Chas. W. Stone, Mrs. Ruth A. Bradford.

WESTBORO.—First Congregational Society.

Dr. Wm. Curtis, Chas. E. Smith, H. B. Nourse.

WESTFORD.—First Congregational Parish.

Rev. J. S. Moulton, J. W. Abbot, Mrs. J. W. Abbot.

WESTON.—First Parish.

Rev. F. B. Hornbrooke, Geo. B. Milton, Mrs. Geo. B. Milton.

WINCHENDON.—Church of the Unity.

K. S. P. Ayer.

WINCHESTER.—The Winchester Unitarian Society.

Rev. Richard Metcalf, Edward Shattuck, *Thomas P. Ayer.

WOBURN.—First Unitarian Parish.

Rev. Wm. S. Barnes, Mrs. Timothy Winn, Mrs. Nathan Wyman.

WORCESTER.—Second Congregational Church.

Rev. E. H. Hall, Hon. Phinehas Ball, Benj. Walker.

WORCESTER.—Church of the Unity.

Rev. Henry Blanchard, Hon. E. B. Stoddard, Hon. J. W. Wetherell.

RHODE ISLAND.

NEWPORT.—Unitarian Congregational Church.

John T. Bush, Wm. K. Covell, W. A. Clarke.

PROVIDENCE.—First Congregational Church.

Rev. Carlton A. Staples, Edward Pearce, Henry L. Parsons.

PROVIDENCE.—Westminster Congregational Society.

Rev. Aug. Woodbury, Frederick W. Seabury, Joshua C. Johnson.

PROVIDENCE.—Church of Ministry at Large.

Rev. Alfred Manchester, L. M. Stelly, S. H. Tingley.

CONNECTICUT.

BROOKLYN.—First Ecclesiastical Society.

Rev. Mrs. Caroline R. James, Chas. G. Williams, Miss Lucy Davison.

HARTFORD.—First Unitarian Congregational Society.

Rev. John C. Kimball, Mr. Augustus F. Freye, Mrs. Aug. F. Freye.

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NEW YORK.

BROOKLYN.—Second Unitarian Congregational Society.
Edwin M. Wheeler, Sylvester Swain.

BROOKLYN.—Third Unitarian Congregational Society.
Rev. S. H. Camp.

BUFFALO.—First Unitarian Congregational Church.
Rev. G. W. Cutter, Oliver G. Steele, Charles Greiner.

ITHACA.—First Unitarian Society.
Rev. H. C. Badger, *Wm. H. Miller, Chas. H. White.

NEWBURGH.—Church of Our Father.
Rev. James Huxtable, Mrs. J. J. Monell, Mrs. Gabriel Farmer.

NEW YORK.—Church of All Souls.
Rev. H. W. Bellows, D.D., Joseph H. Choate, Jackson L. Schultz.

NEW YORK.—Church of the Messiah.
Rev. W. R. Alger, Jos. P. Hale, Mrs. Jos. P. Hale.

ROCHESTER.—First Unitarian Congregational Society.
Rev. N. M. Mann, George F. Danforth, John H. Howe.

SYRACUSE.—Independent Church.
Rev. Ezekiel W. Mundy, Calvin S. Totman, Rev. A. F. Bailey.

SYRACUSE.—Unitarian Congregational Church.
Rev. S. R. Calthrop, Mrs. S. R Calthrop, Mrs. Dr. Bigelow.

TRENTON.—Reformed Christian Church.
Rev. William Silsbee, John S. Prichard, Mrs. Robert Skinner.

TROY.—First Unitarian Society.
Rev. Wm. H. Fish, Jr., Albert E. Powers, Henry L. Lamb.

YONKERS.—First Unitarian Congregational Society.
Fisher A. Baker, Joseph Mattison, Mrs. Joseph Mattison.

NEW JERSEY.

VINELAND.—First Congregational Society.
Rev. M. A. Haskell, Henry Wilbur, Phebe A. Wilbur.

PENNSYLVANIA.

GERMANTOWN.—Unitarian Society.
Mary Grew, George Nichols, *E. W. Clark.

MEADVILLE.—Independent Congregational Church.
Mrs. Harriet Huidekoper, Clinton Cullum, Miss E. G. Huidekoper.

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DELAWARE.

WILMINGTON.—First Unitarian Society.
*Rev. J. M. W. Pratt, George W. Stone, *Thomas McClary.

MARYLAND.

BALTIMORE.—First Independent Church.
Rev. Charles R. Weld, Enoch Pratt, William P. Cole.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.

WASHINGTON.—All Souls Church.
Rev. Clay MacCauley, *Henry A. Willard, Isaiah Hanscom.

SOUTH CAROLINA.

CHARLESTON.—Unitarian Church of Charleston.
Rev. E. C. L. Browne, Alva Gage, Mrs. Alva Gage.

KENTUCKY.

LOUISVILLE.—Church of the Messiah.
Rev. J. H. Heywood, W. A. G. Munn, Mrs. D. Rawson.

OHIO.

CINCINNATI.—First Congregational Unitarian Church.
Mrs. H. C. Whitman, Mrs. Theodore Stanwood, Miss Hattie Evans.
MARIETTA.—First Unitarian Society.
Rev. James T. Lusk, *C. D. Walter, *Jewett Palmer.

MICHIGAN.

ANN ARBOR.—First Unitarian Society.
Rev. J. H. Allen.
DETROIT.—First Congregational Unitarian Society.
*Rev. Calvin Stebbins, *E. C. Skinner, *John Grensel.
MUSKEGON.—First Unitarian Society.
*Rev. F. E. Kittredge, *C. J. Chaddock, Miss Ida C. Temple.

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HOBART.—First Unitarian Church.
*W. C. Litchfield, *C. W. McKay, *Augustus Wood.

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ILLINOIS.

CHICAGO.—Church of the Messiah.
Rev. Brooke Herford, Murry Nelson, H. G. Loomis.

CHICAGO.—Unity Church.
Mrs. John Wilkinson.

CHICAGO.—Third Unitarian Church.
*Rev. T. B. Forbush, *Rev. E. P. Powell, *J. S. Conger.

CHICAGO.—Fourth Unitarian Society.
*Rev. J. T. Sunderland, *Judge Isaac G. Wilson, *Firman Church.

SHELBYVILLE.—Liberal Christian Church.
Rev. Jasper L. Douthit.

MISSOURI.

ST. LOUIS.—Church of the Messiah.
*Rev. John Snyder, Geo. E. Leighton, S. A. Ranlett.

ST. LOUIS.—Mission and Free School.
Geo. Partridge, Joseph Shippen.

ST. LOUIS.—Church of the Unity.
Rev. J. C. Learned, Wm. H. Pulsifer, Mrs. C. B. Burnham.

CALIFORNIA.

SANTA BARBARA.—First Unitarian Society.
*A. C. Rogers, H. K. Winchester, Mrs. H. K. Winchester.

NEBRASKA.

LINCOLN.—Free Congregational Society.
*Rev. W. E. Copeland, *D. A. Cline.

OREGON.

PORTLAND.—First Unitarian Society.
*Rev. Thos. L. Eliot, *Mrs. Frances Winch, *Mrs. Mary E. Frazar.

CANADA.

MONTREAL.—Christian Unitarian Society.
Rev. J. B. Green, Mr. Wright, O. S. Wood.

MONTREAL.—Liberal Christian Union of Montreal.
Miss Mary Morgan, Miss Lydia Warren, Emily Holmes.

TORONTO.—First Unitarian Congregation.
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THE LADIES' COMMISSION ON SUNDAY SCHOOL BOOKS.

*Miss H. F. Kimball, Boston.

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*The persons against whose names the asterisk is placed were not reported present at the Conference; but an examination of the list shows that many delegates were present who did not present their credentials. [SEC.

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